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Marxism Today

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

DENNIS GOODWIN — THE FIGHT FOR JOBS

JOHN TARVER — THE BRITISH MOTOR INDUSTRY

HONOR ARUNDEL — THOUGHTS ON THE EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

SAM FISHER — PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION

DISCUSSION:

J. R. CAMPBELL — THE FIGHT AGAINST THE MONOPOLIES

DIPAK NANDY — HOW NOT TO WRITE HISTORY

LAURIE GREEN — WHAT IS JAZZ?

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Marxism Today

Vol. 7 No. 1

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Editorial Comments

The November by-election

THE November by-election results confirmed that the drop in support for the Tories which was evident in by-elections earlier in 1962 not only continues but has reached massive proportions. No Tory seat with a majority of 6,000 is safe. Labour won two seats, and came within a few hundred of winning two more, but with a smaller total vote than in the 1959 election. The Liberal vote, however, increased in all five constituencies, and at Chippenham the Liberal candidate was the runner-up. In every case the successful candidate had only a minority of the total vote—the trend towards ending the two-party system continues.

Except in South Dorset, where the Tory anti-Common Market candidate got 5,000 votes, it is difficult to say how far this issue was decisive in weakening the Tories. But in whatever way the results are analysed, one clear conclusion can be drawn: the Tories have lost the support of the electorate and must be compelled to resign. Above all, they have no right to take Britain into the Common Market.

The High Wages Myth

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (the name of the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation plus U.S. and Canada) met in Paris at the end of November and cast the horoscopes of the capitalist countries who are members, on the basis of their achievements in the recent past. Some light is thrown on the situation in Britain.

The myth that it is the high wages won by the British workers which are at the root of Britain's difficulties is dispelled by the material presented. Comparing 1953-54 with 1960-61 the O.E.C.D. presents the annual average percentage rise in the wages and salaries bill of the various countries as follows—France 10.9 per cent, West Germany 10.5, Netherlands 9.6, Sweden 7.5, United Kingdom 6.7, U.S. 5.2, and Canada 6 per cent. The annual rise in wage and salary costs per unit of output is as follows—France 6.1 per cent, Germany 3.1, Netherlands 4.5, Sweden 3.5, United Kingdom 4.0, U.S. 2.4 and Canada 2.4 per cent.

So the question is, if the increase in wages and salaries in Britain was fairly modest why was the increase in cost per unit of output just a trifle higher than that of some continentals?

Production in Britain

One reason is that the production of the capitalist economy as a whole and the production per worker employed has grown more slowly in Britain than in any comparable capitalist country.

Between 1955 and 1960 the gross national product of the various countries in the O.E.C.D. rose annually by the following percentages: France 4.2 per cent, West Germany 6, Italy 5.9, United Kingdom 2.7, U.S. 2.3 per cent.

In the period from 1960 to mid-1962 the annual increase in the gross national product was: France 4.7 per cent, West Germany 4.5, Italy 6.7, United Kingdom 2.1 and U.S.A. 3.5 per cent.

If we take the increases in production per worker between 1955 and 1960 we get the following annual percentage increases: France 3.6, West Germany 4.3, Italy 3.9, United Kingdom 2.3, U.S. 1.3.

In the 1960-62 period the annual productivity increases were: France 3.4 per cent, West Germany 3.2, Italy 5.2, United Kingdom 1.4, United States 2.4. It will be noted that productivity in all the countries has slowed down as compared with the previous period. This is most of all the case in the United Kingdom, where the Government's policy of creating unemployment in order to impede the wages movement has definitely hampered any rise in productivity.

The O.E.C.D. estimates the rise in the gross national product for the years 1960-70 and predicts that Britain will continue to lag. Here are the predicted annual increases: France 5 per cent, West Germany 4.1, Italy 5, United Kingdom 3.3, United States 4.4.

The annual increases for all the above mentioned countries combined are 4.4. Thus Britain is singled out as the notorious laggard.

The same applies to the annual increases in productivity, which are predicted as follows: France 4.1 per cent, West Germany 3.7, Italy 4.1, United Kingdom 2.8 and United States 2 per cent.

Evidently his capitalist colleagues have as little faith in Super Mac as the British electorate.

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The statistics show that the main Common Market countries—France, West Germany and Italy—had a higher rate of increase in production and productivity between 1950 and 1955, than they had between 1955 and 1960, and the prediction is that the rates up till 1970 will slow down in the case of West Germany and Italy. The propagandist picture of the Market as a constantly expanding earthly paradise is breaking down.

Planning and Wages

Other detailed predictions of the O.E.C.D. are worth noting. It is suggested that most of the countries involved will be able to find the investment required to enable production to rise as required and that consumption can rise as fast as production. Again Britain is the exception. It is suggested that here production must be allowed to rise faster than the consumption of the mass of the people. If the National Economic Development Council accepts this then the T.U.C. representatives will be confronted with the demand that they co-operate in ensuring that wages and salaries rise less than the increase in production, i.e. that they agree, as a matter of planning policy, to allow profits to rise faster than wages.

There is no miracle in the relatively greater advance of the continental capitalist economies as compared with the British in recent years. They have invested in more new plant than the British bourgeoisie, because they did not waste their resources in militarist megalomania. Until General de Gaulle's recent nuclear tests they did not waste resources on hydrogen bombs or nuclear rockets becoming daily more expensive. The maintenance of armies overseas—Germany and Italy had none—were not deadly drains on their balance of payments, they did not allow capitalist groups to invest abroad more than the economy could afford, and they did not in general adopt stop-start policies of the Selwyn Lloyd type. So their recent economic achievements are better than Britain's, not because these achievements are in any way miraculous but because Britain's are so deplorably bad.

Going Up!

American "sovietologists" (as they are coming to be called) have made a practice in recent years of making estimates of their own (in various ways and on the basis of such partial data as is available to them in published sources) of the total volume of Soviet production. Most of these attempts have been designed to show that Soviet official figures are much exaggerated, that Soviet production remains a long way below the American and that the Soviet hope of "catching-up" by 1970 is quite utopian. One of the most notorious of these estimates, by Professor Nutter (the one relied upon by Professor Walt Rostow in his "non-Communist Manifesto", *The Stages of Economic Growth*) made Soviet industrial output no more than 25 per cent of the U.S. 1955 output. Allen Dulles' department arrived at a figure of 40 per cent. Recent Soviet comparative estimates have claimed a level of 60 per cent (for 1959-60). Now we have the quite remarkable phenomenon of an American estimate that makes all previous estimates of Soviet industrial strength much too cautious. In a recent issue of the *American Economic Review* (as reported in our own *Times* of 13th October and in the *New York Times* of 16th October) two economists, Professor R. W. Campbell and Dr. A. Tarn, reach the result (based on 200 commodities for which output in physical units is available) that the ratio of Soviet to U.S. industrial output in 1960 was 75 per cent or slightly more. As *The Times* comments: "If these assessments are correct—and there is a wealth of material to support them—Russia may yet achieve the target which Mr. Khrushchov has set of outpacing America by the end of the current decade" (*The Times*, 13th October, 1962).

Marxism and Political Theory

There have been some excellent Marxist studies in the English language on the history of political theory. One thinks for instance of the works of Professor George Thomson, of Professor Farrington, or of A. D. Winspear's *The Genesis of Plato's Thought*. But there are still very many and wide gaps that remain to be filled.

All the more welcome, therefore, whatever one's detailed criticisms, is the appearance of *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*, by C. B. Macpherson, Professor of Politics at Toronto (Oxford, 42s.).

"Possessive individualism" is a phrase by which Professor Macpherson characterises that fundamental postulate of bourgeois political thinking, roughly, the inalienable right to dispose of one's property without external coercion. (This includes the "negative" conception of freedom, i.e. the absence of external restraint, freedom *from* which is at the centre of liberal thought.) The sub-title "From Hobbes to Locke", is in a way misleading, for though Macpherson's book consists principally of detailed analyses of the political ideas of Hobbes, the Levellers, James Harrington and Locke, his concern is really with

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the present—the impasse in which political theory finds itself today.

What he has done is to go back to the heyday of political philosophy in England, which is, for good reasons, the era of the bourgeois revolution. There, in the bewildering variety of political ideas, he uncovers two strands, the concern for a valid theory of political obligation *which does not invoke the will of God*, and, as a pre-condition for achieving this, certain assumptions men made about the increasingly bourgeois market society of the 17th century which they generalised as being true of society as such.

Hobbes' philosophy is shown to be a penetrating analysis of the basic atomised relationships in bourgeois society; his mistake (as Locke perceived) was to suppose that this atomisation necessarily outweighed the cohesive class interests of the ruling class.

The Levellers, variously described as "early socialists" and "radical democrats", are seen by Macpherson as, rather, radical liberals. They never advocated universal manhood suffrage: their franchise proposals (which excluded "servants", i.e. all wage-earners) would at most have doubled the voting population, whereas full manhood franchise would have increased it five-fold. At the core of Leveller thought were the basic assumptions of "possessive individualism": they recognised property rights, but widened "property" to include property in one's person (i.e. in one's labouring power). Wage-earners had alienated that right in the wage-contract, and were no longer, therefore, free.

Next, Harrington's theory of the dependence of political power on the distribution of property, which has been hailed as an anticipation of historical materialism, is shown to be consistent only on the assumption that the gentry of 17th century England were committed to establishing and maintaining a market economy. The dynamic of history ceases to operate with the establishment of the bourgeois commonwealth. Finally, the inconsistencies and ambiguities in Locke's synthesising work, are shown to be rooted in the contradictions of his society, whose features he generalised in his thought. Possessive individualism could produce a valid theory of political obligation so long as the rules and values of bourgeois society were necessary because they were the only ones available. With the new possibility of an alternative social order, the political theory of possessive individualism is no longer either necessary or inevitable. Any theory of political obligation today, argues Macpherson, will have to build on other assumptions of what it is to be human and what constitutes human freedom.

Films and Football

The former Soviet Ambassador, Ivan Maisky, once said (*Journey into the Past*, p. 209). "If the English working man put into the political battle half the passion he puts into football, what a wonderful country Great Britain would become."

It is interesting to note that whatever the enthusiasm for Britain's most popular sport, the total attendance at football matches is still far below the attendance at the cinema. For football, an average figure of less than one million per week was given by Edward Sinclair, Managing Director of Group Marketing and Research Ltd., during the Screen Advertising Association's forum on the Cinema last October.

Giving figures that he believes have not been published before, Mr. Sinclair said that an average of 9 million cinema admissions per week were sold in Britain, and that 7½ million different people went to the pictures during the course of the average week. The annual expenditure last year of £62 million on cinema admissions did not include the extra revenue that the cinemas received from the sale of soft drinks, ices, nuts and other confections. There were still over 2,500 cinemas in Britain.

"Measured by its size, by weights of expenditure and number of admissions per week", said Mr. Sinclair, "the cinema stands out still as by far the most important out-of-home entertainment medium." The £62 million spent on admissions represents 40 per cent of all expenditure on out-of-home entertainment in 1961—the remainder being divided unequally between football, cricket, dancing, theatres, Bingo, horse-racing, motor-racing, bowling, skating, concerts, and so on.

Mr. Sinclair is reported (*Daily Cinema*, 1910-62) as telling his audience of advertising people about the great pulling power of the cinema, on occasions drawing people from as far as 20 miles away. "This appeal of the cinema," he stated, "has a number of important implications for advertisers. It means, in particular, that, in spite of closures, there are few people in Great Britain who do not fall within the hinterland of at least one cinema."

The pulling power in all its respects of the cinema was being paraded for the advertising fraternity to illustrate how cinema screens can be a good medium to help sell their clients' wares, and, in regard to cinema screen advertising, Mr. Sinclair instances the value of the film industry's own advertisements in the form of trailers. A good one, he said, can stimulate up to 60 per cent of the audience to want to see a film, and even a poor one would reach a "want-to-see" level of

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around 46 per cent for the same type and quality of films.

All this, I think, brings to our attention not only the continued strength of the cinema as a medium for communication, but, above all, the horrific penetration of advertising into every cultural avenue.

Genghis Khan

It is good to see that Ralph Fox's pioneering work *Genghis Khan,* first published in 1936, has now been republished (Background Books, 10s. 6d.).

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries were periods of great development for the Mongolian people. Strife between independent tribes culminated in unification under the nomad chieftain who was proclaimed supreme khan in 1206 and who adopted the title of Genghis Khan. Later, conquests by Genghis and his successors drained Mongolia of people and diverted political and commercial interests into the four Empires developed in Persia, China, Russia, and Central Asia. Then, after a hundred years or so, the Genghisid rulers were overthrown and replaced by local dynasties.

Ralph Fox was the first, writing in English, to show Genghis as the product of his times and to introduce the stirring events of his life to the English-speaking reader. Of course Marxist scholars find some weakness in the work, and indeed, the study of this period is only at a beginning. Until the time of Genghis, the Mongols had no written language and much of Mongol history was written by scholars from the peoples they conquered.

One day we shall perhaps have the opportunity to read translations of some of the Soviet works on this period and some of the books of the contemporary Mongolian historians. In the meantime it is good to have Ralph Fox's moving and vivid history available once more.

Discussing Brecht

The Experimental Theatre Club of the Oxford University Students justified their name by putting on an extremely capable performance of Brecht's "The Good Woman of Szechuan" at the Oxford Playhouse last month. No curtains were used, and Brecht's hint that the audience should be allowed to see that a job was being done, both by the actors and the stage staff, was carried out. This, together with some very good acting, resulted in a performance which was both moving, and exceptionally thought-provoking.

Initiative did not stop at performance, however; a general invitation was issued to audiences to attend and participate in an open discussion after the Friday performance; and the theatre was packed, mainly by students, who stayed till 11.45 p.m. The discussion was opened by Mr. Martin Esslin, a writer who has been to much trouble to dissociate Brecht the writer from Brecht the active Marxist-politician.

Evidently expecting a left outlook in such a gathering, he went very gingerly on this line, and confined himself to the suggestion that the play propounded no solution, and that Brecht had been criticised for this by the Party in the G.D.R. This point was the chief one which attracted discussion. One member of the audience refuted him very adequately by pointing out that in this play and all his other works, Brecht had emphasised the existence of the class struggle; and never suggested it could be compromised with or avoided. It followed that it had to be fought out; and to do this, a special kind of political party was necessary. This was in fact, the much-sought "solution".

Of course, not many authors of plays could give rise to the kind of discussion which Brecht inspires; many could spark no discussion at all. But the Experimental Theatre Club is to be congratulated on showing what can be done, in performance and discussion, with a really worth while play.

Students Discuss

We noted in November the attraction of Communist ideas for students and instanced their plans for public lectures in London. In fact the response outran their expectations. Four hundred and fifty students were packed into a hall seating 400 and another 150 were turned away when Professor George Thomson lectured on "The Materialist Conception of History", and there were large numbers turned away also from the lectures by Sam Aaronovitch, Arnold Kettle and Maurice Dobb. Noteworthy was the turnout of 270 to hear Professor Bernal despite a snow storm and a last minute change of hall to cope with these numbers.

Sales of Marxist books also surpassed any recent experience, and two students staggered away one night each carrying *inter alia Capital* Volumes 1, 2 and 3 and both volumes of Marx-Engels *Selected Works.*

It is perhaps fair to note that many of these students who organised and attended this series had just finished taking part in the various "Hands Off Cuba" demonstrations.

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Sore, Sore Work!

Those who have read Robin Page Arnot's *The Scottish Miner* will know of the inhuman conditions of women and children in the Scottish pits right up to the middle of the 19th century. Arnot draws much from the evidence given to the Children's Employment Commission appointed by Parliament on the motion of Lord Shaftesbury in 1840. Many of us will be familiar from different publications with one or other of the vivid engravings, once seen never forgotten, that serve as illustrations to the Commission's report.

What I had never realised was how early voices were raised in Scotland against these conditions. I found last month a copy of *The Coal Trade in Scotland,* written in 1808 by Robert Bald of Alloa, Civil Engineer and Mineral Surveyor, a report which also contains *An Enquiry into the Condition of the Women who carry coals in Scotland, known by the name of "Bearers".*

The women bearers, wrote Bald, were a section of the community "who endure a slavery scarcely to be tolerated". He described the different ways in which women were involved in the carrying of coal—some drawing the coal along narrow passages in small wheel-carriages, some carrying the coal themselves from coal face to pit bottom whence it was drawn up by machinery, and some employed in what Bald calls "the most severe and slavish" labour of all, carrying the coals not only from face to pit bottom, but also ascending long and steep series of steps. He had seen women, wrote Bald, take a load of 170 lb., travel with it 150 yards up the slope of the coal below ground, then ascend 117 feet up steps and then travel a further 20 yards to where the burden was finally laid down—and this 24 times in a day's work and for an average of 8d. per day.

Surveying, once, the workings of an extensive colliery, Bald saw a married woman come forward groaning under an excessive weight of coals, trembling in every nerve and almost unable to keep her knees from sinking under her. On coming up to him, she said "in a plaintive and melancholy voice":

> "Oh sir, this is sore, sore work. I wish to God that the first woman who tried to bear coals had broken her back, and none would have tried it again."

Robert Bald, to his honour, came out openly for the ending of these conditions. "I trust," he wrote, "that the day is not very distant, when the system of bearing coals will be only talked of as a very bad old custom, and when one will blush to hear that such slavery existed in Scotland in the 19th century." What is more, he stood up for the rights of women to join in the struggle of the miners—"the woman who bears the coals has right to say as much about the price of labour as her husband. Is it any wonder, then, that the combinations they sometimes form are strong?"

Some hard struggles and a Royal Commission were still needed to bring this practice to an end. But a century and a half later the conditions of the working class in Scotland, as readers of the first article in the November issue of *Marxism Today* will appreciate, leave plenty to blush for.

"*Documents of Living History*"

Under this title a number of French historians and history teachers have taken an interesting initiative. They are publishing with the *Editions Sociales*, Paris, a series of seven folders, each of the format of an ordinary octavo book, and each containing some 45-50 cards bearing key quotations illustrating international but particularly French history—in all around 600 quotations.

These are not the sort of great thoughts, proverbial sayings or well established poetic lines that you normally find in a Dictionary of Quotations, but larger extracts culled from sources of every description. mostly contemporary, illustrating aspects of economic, political and social history. The first folder, for instance, on Antiquity ranges, from a report of a strike of temple-workers in Ancient Egypt drawn from a papyrus held in Turin Museum to a description of the Spartacus Revolt from Appian's *History of the Civil Wars.* Or the sixth folder (1851-1917) includes the full text of the Internationale written by Eugene Pottier in 1871, the text of the first French May Day appeal (1891) and the joint anti-war Declaration made by the French and German delegates to the Zimmerwald Conference of 1915.

Six folders have so far appeared—Antiquity; Middle Ages; 14th-16th Centuries; 17th-18th Centuries; 1789-1848 and 1848-1917. The last, 1917-1945, is due shortly.

Of course quotations can be abused and become a menace, but anyone who has lectured on history to young or old knows the power of an apt extract from contemporary documents whether it be leaflet, poster, letter, newspaper article, poem or history. And they will know, too, how difficult it often is to find these apt illustrative quotations precisely when you need them and in a form that can be used.

I feel sure that lecturers and teachers in this country would welcome a similar initiative devoted, of course, in the main, to British social history.

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The Fight for Jobs

Dennis Goodwin

"*We do not want sympathy—we want our jobs. We mean business. We are going to fight. We expect your help. We are not going to be forced back to the 'thirties.*"
(W. A. G. Roberts, Vehicle Builders' leader at Lobby of Parliament, November 1962.)

"*The higher unemployment figures may not turn out to be an altogether unmixed curse.*"
(*Sunday Times*, September 1962.)

THE year 1962 has ended—a year of growing confrontation of class forces in the fight for jobs. Unemployment grows, vacancies decline, the price of Tory economic and cold war policy is presented *to the working class* for payment. The workers and unions have now to rally their forces to refuse to pay the bill.

For the unemployed 1962 meant an ever harder fight to find work of any kind. Among those at work it meant a current of alarm and anxiety at future prospects. But the year was also one of rising struggle, and some evaluation is required if the further course of the struggle is to succeed.

What is the scope of unemployment, is it likely to grow, and if so how rapidly and to what extent? What are the aims of monopoly capital in this situation, is it the unwilling victim of economic circumstances beyond its control or is it actively influencing unemployment prospects? What is the political significance of the fight for jobs, is it simply one aspect of the economic struggle or has it wider political significance? What general policy best corresponds to the aim of full employment, and what tactical questions arise in the different circumstances in which unemployment develops? How is the unity of all forces, workers and workless, to be achieved? And most important of all, what relevance has socialism as a fundamental answer to unemployment?

This is rather a large number of questions. It is not possible to answer all definitively because of deep and far reaching factors, the working out of which depends on the interplay of class forces. But discussed they must be throughout the movement, if there is to be a successful, united struggle to defeat the menace of unemployment, which on a mass scale is third only to war and famine as a social scourge.

The Scale of Unemployment

The steady and ominous rise in unemployment figures throughout 1962, after a year of smaller rises in 1961, must surely have caused a furrowed brow or two among even the most optimistic of Tory economic apologists who have buried the word "sack" and regard "redundancy" as a sign of a flourishing, developing economy, with industrial change and development all over the place leading to new demands for labour and consequent changes in employment.

The hard fact is that the figures for November 1962 were the highest of any year since the end of the war for that month. They considerably surpass even 1946 with its inevitable redundancies arising from changeover from war to peace production. The 1962 figure shows a 40 per cent increase *in one year*, the highest for any post-war year except 1952—the first year of the return of the Tory Government.

Totals of Unemployed as at Mid-November

1951	281,400
1952	462,500
1953	380,000
1954	317,800
1955	264,500
1956	287,100
1957	347,200
1958	500,900
1959	512,100
1960	392,800
1961	401,200
1962	*578,700*

(*M.O.L. Gazette* figures Great Britain and Northern Ireland, to nearest 100.)

As the unemployment figures have *risen*, so the number of vacancies has *declined*, and 1962 saw for the first post-war year an actual decline in the number of employed workers, despite the "bulge" and a record number of young people leaving school available for work.

Vacancies in relation to numbers unemployed 1959–62 (U.K. only)

	1959	*1960*	*1961*	*1962*
Unemployed	419,000	328,000	366,000	545,000
Vacancies	246,000	324,000	289,000	161,700
Deficiency of jobs	153,000	4,000	77,000	294,000

Moreover a large proportion of these vacancies are for highly specialised skills not available among those now unemployed.

A further growing factor is the spread of un-

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employment. While Scotland, Northern Ireland and the North West have been by far the worst hit, it is necessary to explode the theory that all is a garden of roses in London and the South, and that all that is necessary for the workless in the North is a solution to the problems of retraining, rehousing and resettlement in this luscious pool of "over full" employment.

In fact London and the South East and the Midlands, while still with the lowest regional figures, showed an increase in unemployment in 1962 only exceeded by Scotland and the North West and the reality is revealed by the fact that with 75,000 unemployed in London and the South East total vacancies have slumped to only half that figure.

So one could go on. The Chairman for the Regional Board for Industry in the North West, in September 1962 quoted a figure of thirty men unemployed for every known vacancy. In three years unemployment has trebled in metal manufacture and nearly trebled in motors. Not even N.E.D.C. is prepared to take anything but a serious view of prospects, and higher figures are anticipated for 1963.

The Guardian correspondent may plumb the depths of fatuousness by quoting an unknown industrialist as giving the reason for men leaving Middlesbrough as—

> "an absence of suitable girls to marry—the best have gone off to London for a taste of the high life before settling down"

—the reality is that the scourge of the dole queue is growing, and the reasons have to be sought elsewhere than in such nonsense.

Why Unemployment Grows

A recent Fabian pamphlet by Geoffrey Goodman, *Redundancy in the Affluent Society*, quotes tellingly from Beveridge's *Full Employment in a Free Society*:

> "Full employment means that unemployment is reduced to short intervals of standing by, with the certainty that very soon one will be wanted in one's old job again or will be wanted in a new job that is within one's powers."
>
> "For men to have value and a sense of value there must always be useful things waiting to be done with money to pay for them. *Jobs rather than men, should wait.*" (my emphasis, *D.G.*)

"Jobs rather than men, should wait." But this is the crux of the whole question, because for monopoly the aim is that "*men rather than jobs should wait*".

Monopoly is faced with maintaining and increasing the tribute it exacts from the people under conditions of Britain's changed position in the world. Its drive for profit has to be conducted in a world in which the United States and West German monopoly have outstripped it and become the dominant forces; in which the old methods of extracting superprofits from the "Empire on which the Sun Never Sets" have gone never to return and new methods have to be sought; in which its hatred of socialism, and the cold war and arms race policies that monopoly gives rise to, constitute an ever increasing burden and strain on the economy of the country; in which the uneven development of capitalism has led to a growing challenge to British markets and spheres of influence.

It is in this context that British monopoly capital is trying to measure up to the "rat race" it sees ahead. (In case anyone might think that all is to be solved by the peripatetic Prince become Productivity Prince and rousing the nation to a supreme effort by doubling the size of postage stamps and increasing the number of bows and waves of the hand per mile per procession, let it be at once said that rather dirtier work is afoot.)

As always, monopoly's aim is to climb out of its deeper phase of crisis on the backs of the workers. Its recipe is—intensified exploitation; more work done by fewer workers, without increases in wages or earnings. In this way profits, they hope, will be maintained or increased; competitiveness achieved without surrendering the cold war policy; and funds and resources made available for the exploitation of the peoples of the newly independent countries. And if the overriding considerations of a united front of reaction against the Socialist world require entry into the Common Market, with even greater economic problems? Why then, the drive against the working class must be pushed ahead all the harder. And that means that "men must wait on jobs", for full employment is a barrier to the achievement of all these aims and two men at the gate for every job inside the gate is the ideal situation for every monopolist to carry forward his attack.

Their own statements make this abundantly clear:

> "Several big groups have been deliberately streamlining their work force in preparation for Common Market competition" (*Times*, 5.11.62).

The sack race to be followed by the rat race.

> "If higher productivity is to be achieved on anything like the scale envisaged by N.E.D.C. there will be no room on the factory floor for more people than are strictly necessary to work and service the machines" (*Times*, 9.11.62).

But who is to decide how many are "strictly necessary"?

> "The apparent paradox of rising output and growing unemployment is underlined by the Treasury Bulletin for Industry, which points out that while demand (other than fixed investment) is up; current expenditure on goods and services by local and public authorities is up; personal consumption is up,

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and industrial production is up; unemployment is also up. No explanation is offered by the Bulletin" (*Guardian*, 2.11.62).

"The least attractive argument for Britain joining the Common Market is one not put on paper, but heard as it is passed around by word of mouth. 'It needs the Common Market to teach Labour a lesson' " (Lord Balfour: Lords Debate, 1962).

At the root of the growing unemployment is monopoly policy (above all its determination to keep wages down) and monopoly actions. For years they have argued the desirability of a "pool" of a million unemployed. They have the U.S. example of unemployment never dropping below the four million figure in boom or slump conditions. Now, allied with policies which produce stagnation, unemployment, and short time is the renewed drive for speed-up and the deliberate cutting of the labour force. The monopolies' aim is to lessen the labour cost per article produced. It can be done by increasing the number produced, by reducing wages, or by a combination of both. Reduction of real wages is its main aim. For this it requires drastically weakening Trade Union organisation on the job. Increasing unemployment is intended as its weapon to do this.

This is the situation, together with problems arising from inevitable economic and technical change, that the unions and the workers have to face. It opens up the prospects of a major struggle with much at stake. Were the monopolists to succeed, then indeed the entire working class and Trade Union movement would suffer a grievous blow. But even more so, if monopoly's aims are defeated and their traditional way out of crisis barred, then basic solutions to the economic problems facing the country will be forced on to the agenda, under conditions in which the progressive and left forces can make major advances in curbing the power of monopoly and opening up the way to far-reaching advances.

Thus the fight for jobs is not only—as it must first and foremost be—the defence of the urgent immediate interests of the workers. It is also a struggle with profound content in the whole fight for basic social change.

This then, is why it is so urgent that the full strength of the working class and the people should be brought into action to win this fight. It requires concrete examination of the stage of the struggle, experiences and prospects.

Some Problems and Experiences

Already a powerful movement is developing to stop sackings and prevent the growth of large-scale unemployment. The experiences of this movement already prove that any limitation of the struggle makes for setbacks and defeats, and that it must extend in content as well as scope if it is to succeed.

This movement has included the first national official stoppage of work in the history of the struggle against unemployment—the one day strike of the N.U.R. railwaymen on October 3rd. There have been important token stoppages of work in Scotland and in particular factories. A series of lobbies of Parliament by particular industries (rails, vehicles, aircraft) and from the hardest hit regions (e.g., Merseyside) have taken place, town's marches and meetings, and marches and demonstrations by workers in particular factories (Stratford, Lancing, Darlington Rail Shops, Napiers, English Electric, Stevenage, etc.).

Noticeable too, has been the increased activity of the local Trades Councils, fulfilling their traditional and indispensable role of uniting the local movement through conferences and other activities.

As this movement extends, and gains experience and strength, it is more and more being confronted with three needs: increasing unity for a national policy for full employment and a Government prepared to carry it out; solution of specific tactical problems arising from the differing reasons for the growth of unemployment in particular sectors of industry; the unity of the unemployed workers with those at work in the conduct of the struggle.

A Policy for Full Employment

As long as the Tory Government continues to govern—irrespective of and in defiance of by-election results—and is allowed to pursue policies which serve monopoly at the expense of the people, unemployment will grow.

Of outstanding importance becomes the need for all sections of workers in all industries, to unite around a policy which will carry forward their interests. To the extent that such a policy is fought for, it will become possible to secure certain partial gains imposed on an unwilling government. At the same time it will rally all those forces who can bring about a speedy General Election which would result in the overwhelming defeat of monopoly's agents and the return of a Labour Government, under tremendous mass pressure, to carry out policies basically opposed to those of the Tories.

In the field of full employment, such policies must be based on increasing home purchasing power, expanding the economy, providing an alternative trading policy to the Common Market, curbing monopoly, and drastically reducing the burden of arms expenditure. Such a policy *could* create *more jobs* by the use of state power.

Alongside the fight for such a policy, and an essential part of it, must be resistance to sackings and the demand for work *now*.

The main elements of a general policy for full employment, in a Britain still capitalist and dominated by monopoly, should be along the following lines, and these points are well known to those who

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have followed Communist policy in the fight for jobs.

Increase purchasing power and therefore jobs. This means higher wages, and the rejection of all pay-pause theories of whatever variety. It means shorter hours and the 40-hour week for all without loss of pay. (How ironic, and what a challenge, that while 578,000 are unemployed, and 70,000 on short time, overtime being worked amounts to the equivalent of about 1,200,000 jobs being done, i.e. more than double the total unemployment figure at that time.) Increase benefits and pensions. Expand the social services to provide good homes for all and the schools, hospitals, that the people need.

Expand the economy. Stop all attempts by the Tories to dismantle basic industries such as coal and railways in the interests of the huge oil, rubber, and road haulage interests. Curb the power of the monopolies now, and with it the power of a tiny section to determine whether men shall work or not. Extend public ownership to the decisive industries at the earliest possible moment, free of huge burdens of interest and compensation, so that the economy can begin to be planned in the interests of the people. Opposition to all policies producing stagnation. Important new industrial developments are needed. Coal, atomic energy, workers' skill, are not being properly utilised.

Common Market—no! Trade with all—yes. The Communist Party has put forward its proposal for a World Trade Conference, and this is in absolute accord with the need of full employment. Trade reliance on the Common Market means a rapid extension of unemployment. Yet the goods Britain can produce—including Macmillan's so-called "sophisticated products"—can find a ready market for years and years to come in the socialist countries, the newly independent countries, and the Commonwealth. Given proper planning, what two-thirds of the world needs we could help to supply. Nor does this mean an end to or worsening of trade with West Europe and the U.S.A., for they need trade with Britain as much as Britain needs trade with them. And if this trade needs financing in part by long term credits then let the huge financial institutions be compelled to disgorge; let capital gains and the now colossal expense account racket be ruthlessly taxed and the arms expenditure slashed.

Cut arms expenditure by half. A policy for peace is a policy for work. The old reactionary slogan "War means work" is now being exposed for what it is, for the cold war means not work but the dole queue. To halve the arms bill, as a first step, would mean £750,000,000 annually being made available, for economic development and increased purchasing power.

Of course full agreement on such a programme is not the condition of unity in the struggle. But it is such a policy that will have to be fought for, sooner or later. Better sooner than later, if the fight for full employment is to become something more than, and more powerful and productive than, a piecemeal sectional struggle, however necessary and urgent it is that every section comes into action now.

Some Specific Problems

While the fight for an alternative national policy is paramount, there are now arising specific problems in the fight for work. These are difficult and complex, in the context of monopoly rule, Tory Government, and the role of the right-wing trade union leaders, who are opposed to any real and serious struggle. (This latter point must never be forgotten, because the right-wing leaders and the Tory Government have identical interests in the sense that neither are prepared to decisively challenge monopoly.)

Can closures be prevented? What about industries that are actually contracting? Can workers expect the right to a "job for life"? What about the compensation and severance pay problem? What about retraining? These are some of the issues arising.

Closures and Mergers

There is no doubt that the working class and the unions are entitled to use their maximum strength to resist unemployment arising from mergers and closures designed to benefit monopoly at the expense of the people.

This is clearest of all in the railways and mining, and has been argued fully. The case will be familiar with *Marxism Today* readers. The essence of the case is that basic, necessary, modern, well-equipped industries, capable of fulfilling indispensable service to the economy, are due for the axe, not to strengthen the economy, but to strengthen dominant sections of monopoly capital. What is happening has nothing to do with the industries "paying their way". If the Tories had the slightest honesty on that issue they could prove it by wiping out compensation payments to the holders of stocks whose value has been paid over and over and over again; by limiting oil imports, and restricting Road Haulage C licences. The fight against closures is not only the fight for work but the fight for the people's interests.

Unemployment resulting from mergers and take-overs likewise has to be opposed with all possible strength. The English Electric take-over of Napiers, and then merger with Rolls Royce, made possible the decision to produce the Gazelle engine by Rolls Royce and to shut down Napiers: 2,300 men and women are sacked. But how many extra jobs will be created at Hillingdon or Derby? Certainly nothing like the equivalent of jobs lost. Here is but another form of getting more work done by fewer workers

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Redundancy in Contracting Industries

In some industries, notably textiles, shipbuilding, agriculture, and mining, there has been a contraction in labour force in recent years. First and foremost the fight has to be put up for a positive future and a policy of expansion, for all are industries basic to the country's needs. If in spite of everything that is done shut-downs are threatened, the workers and unions have nevertheless the right to expect that they will not be thrown on to the scrapheap like an old sock; that there is the longest possible notice of dismissal (with all the talk about Annual Guaranteed Wage agreements what about a year in such cases, or compensation equivalent?), and that contraction is not allowed to become the excuse for sacking stewards and weakening trade union organisation in the rest of the industry.

Redundancy in Expanding or Stable Industries

In motors, aircraft, docks, print, clothing, furniture, steel—and some others, basic and mostly expanding industries—the employers are using the weapon of sackings or reductions in the permanent labour force to return to seasonal or casual working dependent on demand. They want to weaken trade union organisation by using "redundancies" as the cloak under which the shop stewards and other militant workers on the factory floor are "got rid of" and to create the maximum feeling of uncertainty and insecurity among all workers so as to dampen down wages struggles and resistance to speed up. The motor industry is a classic example.

Casualisation is a curse, irrespective of the small number of workers who go for it, and plays right into the employers' hands. In industries such as these, all possible support is needed for every struggle to retain the labour force, to press for alternative work to be brought into the factory when the demand for the "normal" product lessens (what about some of the aircraft factories producing prefabricated houses or housing units and helping to solve the acute housing problem?) and for sharing of work as an alternative to dismissals when it will carry over employment to periods of greater demand and prevent the weakening or break up of factory organisation.

"A Job for Life"

Does all this mean that the struggle is for the right of any worker to remain in any particular job for life? Of course not, and those champions of the sacred "managerial rights" who try to pretend that the marches, lobbies, and campaigns against sackings are actions of workshop Canutes trying to hold back the tide of change, are talking through their bowler hats.

Three million workers change their job every year. No one is asking for a nationwide standstill on jobs. But every worker has the right to *a* job, at wages and under conditions comparable to that which his skill and ability entitle him. Every worker is entitled to "the certainty that very soon one will be wanted in one's old job again or be wanted in a new job within one's powers". Every worker has the right to the maximum protection while changing jobs. Every worker is entitled to expect that trade union organisation, hard fought for and won, shall not be swept aside by the device of redundancy.

Compensation and Absorption

Nor is compensation the answer, as so many apologists for the existing order argue. Of course every trade unionist will be for getting the best possible compensation from the employer—whether it be for accident, injury, industrial disease, or dismissal. It is true that a "good" compensation agreement can help to cushion the sacked worker over difficult times for a spell. But the hard fact remains—if half a million workers are sacked, then irrespective of the compensation, half a million jobs are gone unless new jobs are created and the sacked workers fitted into those jobs. And that is far from the case at present.

The I.C.I. severance pay arrangement—a maximum of twenty-two weeks' pay (only twelve weeks' maximum if the sacked employee has found a job in the period of notice) is reputedly one of the best. But what happens when the twenty-two weeks has run out, or the two weeks, or three or four weeks, for the younger worker? Under such conditions compensation can become partly a means of buying off the struggle, just as Fords were more than willing to pay £11 a week to victimised workers for a period, in the hope (surely they are to be mistaken) of preventing a united official struggle.

Often, too, the argument of "absorption" or "natural wastage" is put up. This means that while the labour force is reduced, no one gets the sack. All that happens is that no new labour is taken on until the agreed figure has been reached.

This policy is truly a menace to the youth, for it means closed doors to the factories and industries which operate such a policy, and agreement on such procedures can mean speed up, a pool of unemployed labour in the industry which the employer will not be slow to utilise, that number of jobs lost, and the worsening of the already severe problems beginning to face the school-leavers and young workers.

Mr. Roberts' comment quoted above—"not sympathy, but jobs"—represents the true interests and real needs of the workers today.

Automation

Automation and major mechanisation of industries or particular processes and jobs continues to

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grow. The employers have made considerable headway in treating resultant changes as "managerial functions". Unless trade union strength results in the workers securing a major share of the increased productivity resulting, and safeguards on jobs, and retraining, such steps can lead to increased unemployment or, as in the case of the docks, increased casualisation as well. Through all the millions of words of speeches and the mountain of resolutions—often excellent in intent and content—there is hardly a single really effective automation or mechanisation agreement in British industry today really safeguarding the workers' interests.

Unity in the Struggle

Perhaps one of the outstanding lessons of the truly magnificent, courageous, and never to be forgotten struggles against mass unemployment in the 1930's was that only if those at work united with those out of work could a really successful struggle be waged.

Factors both for unity and disunity exist. The spirit of working class solidarity prompts the man at work to struggle for and alongside his less fortunate brother. In doing so he also acts from self interest, for he knows that in the absence of a struggle his turn may be next. But unless positive leadership is given the worker at work can regard the man outside the gate as a threat, perhaps prepared to work for less, or to work harder.

Moreover the unemployed worker has to face the startling change of perhaps working in a big plant one day, part of a vigorous fraternal organisation, the next day isolated, alone, often with no one taking any particular interest in him. As the period of unemployment gets longer—as in general it is now doing especially in the areas of highest unemployment so competition for jobs gets more intense and, with the competition, division and antagonism can grow.

To overcome all this is urgent. To do so could well be decisive in defeating the employers' strategy. Nor can it be overcome in words. It requires positive action, and the workers at work, and the unions, have to lead.

First, the workless must be associated actively and on a basis of equality in all action to defend jobs, and fight for full employment policies. This was done outstandingly in the recent Merseyside deputation to London where workers and workless acted together in unity, trade unionists all. Not a single activity should take place in this struggle without the unemployed being invited and helped to play an active part. Every action of unemployed should have the full support of the unions. Here is a job particularly fitted to the Trades Councils.

The Trade Union movement must unite to secure substantial increases in unemployment benefits. The present scale is a scandal. Never in the history of unemployment benefits has the gap between average wages and weekly benefit been so great. High rents, hire purchase payments, especially for young married couples, high fares to pay to look for work, all can make the gap between a weekly wage and the dole the bringer of terrible hardship.

The Communist Party has recently proposed a new scale of benefits as the basis of a powerful movement, £4 for a single adult male or female; £7 for a married couple; £1 for each dependant child, irrespective of family allowances; no waiting period, i.e. immediate qualification for benefit, and with married women having equal benefits for equal contributions. These proposals deserve the strongest possible support.

Trade union branches and officers must never forget that an unemployed trade unionist is still a trade unionist, to be encouraged to attend the branch, to raise his problems, to receive support. They should be regarded as key fighters for full employment, for they know what its like to feel the sharpest edge of Tory policy. At meetings, in the press, on the lobbies, they can be powerful spokesmen.

Is Full Employment Possible under Capitalism?

These, then, are some of the urgent, immediate questions that arise. They show, in the writer's view, that if the forces of the mass movement grow and unite sufficiently, the growth of unemployment can be halted, sackings prevented in particular circumstances, monopoly's policies defeated, and the people's interests defended. But this raises a further major question of Marxist theory—can full employment be achieved under capitalism?

Goodman draws near to this problem in the pamphlet already referred to, but I think completely misses the basic point. He writes:

> "But there is this consolation: The impact of structural unemployment in a 'smaller world' is less likely to be catastrophic as it once was unless the politicians ignore all the lessons of recent history. International economic movements are more predictable than they were because more people are aware of the danger signs and conscious of the social and political pitfalls of ignoring them."

—and later:

> "The Government—and that means any Government in the modern state—has it in its power to expand or contract the economy almost at will . . . The maintenance of overall full employment is not just an axiom now accepted by all political parties—however reluctantly by the Conservatives, it is a precondition for any civilised society."

But supposing the only alternative to the "pitfalls" is a policy which undermines the power of monopoly?

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Or that the pressure of outside forces, e.g. U.S. and West German competition, drives monopoly on not only to ignoring the pitfalls but creating the conditions for falling into them, because of its drive for profit?

And supposing, as seems likely to be the result of Maudling's "expansionary" measures of autumn 1962, all that such measures result in is some temporary lessening of unused capacity, but without any increase in manpower, with the increased capacity operated by the same or even a smaller labour force? If Reggie is sacked can Selwyn be far behind?

And suppose because of all these factors monopoly wants to try to "teach Labour a lesson"?

This is not to say that the challenge of the socialist world is not a factor in making monopoly think twice about the consequences of large-scale unemployment. But this does *not* mean that it is necessarily either within the power of monopoly to avert it, or its conscious policy to do so. The signs are that the very opposite is the case.

The fact is that as long as monopoly is the dominant force in Britain the threat and danger of large-scale unemployment is always present. Nor is there any guarantee that it could not "escalate" to massive proportions.

It is not, primarily, monopoly's consciousness of the possible consequences of large-scale unemployment that determines its policies and their outcome. It is only the united action and power of the people that can compel monopoly capital to yield ground, however unwillingly, and only in the face of the *force majeure* of the mass movement.

The power of the mass movement can succeed, while capitalism remains, only to the extent that it can compel state action directed against monopoly. Such state action can, by weakening monopoly, introduce measures of planning, extend its power of direction and control over industry, and prevent, with the mass support of the people, monopoly using unemployment in order to lower real wages and the purchasing power of the people, so as to increase its profits.

Such an approach, which involves major inroads on the power of monopoly, is only possible granted the political advance of the working class and the Labour movement. A working class, and truly national, policy of this kind would have to be a major element in the election programme of the anti-monopoly forces, and mass support would be needed to sustain it.

Only such a policy could make possible full employment, achieved in the past only in conditions of war or short-lived capitalist boom.

Nor is this in contradiction with the fact that only with the final and decisive breaking of the grip of monopoly capital, represented by working class power and its achievements, can unemployment be ended once and for all.

It is these achievements of socialism, that alone can *guarantee* full employment and rising living standards and ensure that automation and technical advance lighten labour, shorten working hours, raise real wages, without a single worker having no job to go to.

But it is little use "waiting for the great day". Today's struggles gather the forces, unite them in struggle, carry them forward to positions from which all the better can those forces make further and more far reaching advances. It is not the experiences of mass unemployment that offer the best conditions for the victory of full employment policies. Mass unemployment means monopoly in the ascendant, its policies carried through at the expense of the working class.

It is the fight for jobs *now*, solidarity in every struggle *now*, the fight for a practical, immediate alternative *now*, that defends the present interests of the workers while helping forward the fight for their longer term interests. The task facing the movement is not to accept monopoly power unchallenged until the day it can be ended for ever, but to prepare for the socialist transformation of society by attacking it now, weakening its grip on the life of the people, weakening its power.

Of course, and inevitably, there comes a point beyond which monopoly cannot yield, for to do so would make it something other than it is. The fight for jobs, because it is such a fundamental question, can help to ensure that when that point is reached the forces of socialist advance are decisive.

The Communist Party

A final, and most important point of all.

If the growth of unemployment is to be stopped; monopoly policy replaced by policies in the interests of the working class and the people, trade union organisation and unity strengthened to meet the growing challenge—then all will depend on the extent to which membership of the Communist Party grows, and with that growth its influence.

The Communist Party is the leading and indispensable force for the change in policy of the entire Labour movement so urgently needed. It is the leading force in the fight for the defeat of the Tories.

If the Tories remain, monopoly has its faithful instrument for the carrying out of its policies, with large-scale unemployment and lowered living standards the result.

If a right-wing Labour Government comes to power, and is allowed to operate capitalist economic policies, equally there will be no solution to the problem.

The crux of the question is to achieve the necessary

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change in the policy of the Labour movement, the Labour Party, the T.U.C., the Co-operatives. It is the crux for full employment just as it is for peace.

The registration of the extent to which the outlook of the Labour movement is changing is precisely the growth of the Communist Party.

With Communists in some hundreds more factories and trade union branches it would be impossible for the T.U.C. General Council to respond to the critical situation with measures which cannot possibly do anything more than achieve the slightest amelioration of the situation.

With Communist M.P.s and councillors there would be a real challenge to Tory policy in Parliament and in the councils, reaching out among the masses of the people—and lobbyers for work would get something more than being invited to "lobby the Tories—not us" from some Labour M.P.s so that they could be in on a juicy spy-case debate.

If there were two readers of the *Daily Worker* and of our literature for every one at present, then an entirely new *quality* would be added to the struggle, for our alternative policy and our line of unity and action would reach into sections at present untouched.

And if this seems, to some, perhaps a little unreal, then it must also be said that tens of thousands of workers are thinking as never before in their lives. They are concerned with Britain's future and that of their families. Tory, Liberal, right-wing Labour do not provide an answer to their questioning. But the Communists do. And that is the basis for advance and growth. It is this advance that is the answer to the dole queue, means test, and all the monopoly-induced hardships that go with them.

The British Motor Industry

John Tarver

ENTER Oxford from the east: first you will pass car factories strung for a mile along the main road. Drive into Oxford from the north, and you will quickly reach a third large car factory. Come from the south—you will find a huge garage bearing the same car's name at the edge of the city centre. Use the western approach, and you will indeed see the first college, but a college built by millions won from car workers' labour and named after Nuffield.

In sixty years the British motor industry has become a most powerful factor in the structure of capitalism, consuming a high and growing proportion of steel, new investment and skilled labour. Since 1945 about 10 per cent of all finished steel in Britain has been supplied to the industry and it has provided about 10 per cent of our exports. Today it directly employs 425,000 people, with another half-million closely dependent upon it.

The chief firms occupying an important place in the industry divide into five groups:

PRODUCERS OF A GENERAL RANGE OF VEHICLES
- British Motor Corporation (Austin, Morris, Wolseley, Riley, M.G., B.M.C. Commercial)
- Ford (and Thames Commercial)
- Rootes (Hillman, Humber, Singer, Sunbeam, Commer, Karrier)
- Standard-Triumph International (under Leyland)
- Vauxhall (and Bedford Commercial)

PRODUCERS OF A RESTRICTED RANGE
- Rolls-Royce (car division)
- Rover (independent)
- Jaguar (independent)
- Daimler (under Jaguar, formerly under B.S.A.)
- Leyland & A.C.V. (commercial vehicles only)

PRODUCERS OF ACCESSORIES
- Lucas; Dunlop; Smiths; Turner & Newall; etc.

BODY BUILDERS OWNED BY THE FIVE LARGE FIRMS
- Fisher & Ludlow; Vanden Plas (B.M.C.)
- Briggs (Ford)
- Thrupp & Maberly; British Light Steel Pressings (Rootes)
- Mulliners (Standard)
- (Vauxhalls have produced their own bodies, under American practice)

INDEPENDENT BODY BUILDERS
- Pressed Steel

The financial and marketing conditions for each group of firms differ. Several members in three of the groups have varied interests in other fields. The accessory producers in particular have great and scattered monopoly interests.

However their diversity of background may affect their decisions and behaviour at critical times all the firms in the industry are drawn together in the production of highly valuable consumer goods. All demand a high level of investment and hence of available finance. Therefore motor firms are especially sensitive to changes in national economic life affecting the consumer market and the movement of money.

Fluctuations in purchase tax, the Bank Rate and other Whitehall decisions strongly influence the industry. It is a branch of our economy usually dependent upon the ups and downs of trade and policy.

Seen as the background to fierce class struggle for higher wages or higher profits, this aspect in the nature of the motor industry helps to explain how

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comparatively high wages have been won in many of its sections during times of economic buoyancy. Motor workers have built an exceptionally strong trade union organisation in the workshop and persistent struggles to increase hourly rates, piecework prices and bonus have achieved some important successes. The frequent changes in the process of production and the economic setting of the industry are also an occasion for the motor employers to attack living standards whenever profits are threatened. Flip the economic coin, and mass short-time and redundancy appear with sudden force.

Motor workers have stood in the forefront of a succession of bold campaigns for higher wages and shorter hours. In recent years some very determined campaigns, of profound importance for all trade unionists, have been waged against dismissals and for the right to work. The struggle at the Ford plant, with vigorous resistance to victimisation, is a current example of the leading role being played by car workers.

Improved national agreements have been secured by the trade union movement and, on their foundation, further advances in the workshops have been brought about. Only the utmost display of shop-floor militancy has preserved any advances gained in the face of subsequent harsh attacks from the employers.

In April 1962, according to Ministry of Labour figures, average earnings for a male motor worker were £18 12s. 6d. For any worker unfortunate enough to be a woman, however, average earnings were £9 7s. 0d. The men's earnings stood first among all British industries, but the women's were surpassed by earnings in transport, for instance, and the gap between the two was one of the most glaring on record.

It is worth noting, on the other hand, that last July actual wage rates in the metal manufacturing industries stood at 128 per cent of their 1956 level. In British industry as a whole the corresponding figure was 130 per cent and in printing (the second-highest-paid trade) it was 134 per cent.

The averages conceal extraordinary variations from worker to worker and from one month to the next. Most of all, they hide the fact that a growing proportion of cars are now being assembled at new plants in low-wage areas. At the Pressed Steel factory in Swindon it is reported that 1,400 bodies are being produced each week (in a national total of 30,000) from labour paid as little as 8d. below the prevailing rate.

Losses due to short-time and lay-offs have increased. In January 1961 85,000 workers were on short-time. Although that total has not been exceeded since then, talk of a return to the pre-war days of seasonal work and annual cuts has become so commonplace as to arouse little notice.

Statistics do not record the hardship suffered by working-class families. Not all who work for motor firms are sufferers, however. Among the fifteen British firms which paid their directors most in 1961 four motor firms appear. Jaguar paid their seven directors an average of £27,000 each, Leyland paid their seven £22,500, the nine directors of B.M.C. each received about £18,000 and Ford's nine full-time directors almost £30,000.

The gross profit of all vehicle and aircraft firms rose by 11 per cent in their last trading year. Nevertheless, the gross return upon the net assets of the firms declined from 20 per cent to 19 per cent. The marked growth of their constant capital is not being sustained by trading progress at the moment.

History

The British motor industry became active in 1896, when restrictive legislation against self-propelled transport was repealed. In that year the production of Daimler cars began at Coventry.

It was easy to enter the industry. General engineering firms and cycle manufacturers did so in large numbers. Unlike the United States, Britain did not develop a system of standardised parts and specialised sub-contracting. Our old-established machining companies were resistant to change and too powerful to be compelled. The early British car makers were forced to spend a great deal of capital in constructing component parts for their vehicles. Innovation flourished and firms which failed to keep pace with labour-saving advances went to the wall. Before 1913 nearly 200 different models of car were placed on the market but over half of them disappeared.

Expansion was slow because of such initial difficulties. In 1911, when 19,000 cars and trucks were manufactured, the Ford "Model T" was introduced from America. By 1914 Ford had become the leading producer, with an annual output of 6,000 cars, followed by Wolseley, Morris, Austin, Singer and Rover.

The production of commercial vehicles grew still more slowly. The first, a Thornycroft, appeared in 1902. In 1912, however, a war-minded government launched a scheme for subsidising the purchase of certain types of commercial vehicle.

When the First World War broke out, overall production was less than in France and only one-fifteenth of America's. The chief handicap was the lack of an efficient industry supplying components and accessories.

In 1915 a duty of $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent was imposed upon imported cars and the continuation of this tariff removed for many decades the threat of foreign competition at home. Between 1922 and 1929 production soared from 73,000 vehicles to 238,000. The 1920's saw the decisive transformation of the industry from one with a large number of small and unstable

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firms to one containing a small number of large and stable ones. However, comparative stability for the shareholders was accompanied by seasonal employment and by attempts to undermine the smaller firms by the larger until the next radical change twenty-five years later. From eighty-eight firms thirty-one survived, of whom three (Morris, Austin and Singer) made 75 per cent of all British cars.

At the same time the component and accessory trade began to take its modern shape; American flow-production methods were adopted here; and car prices fell by an average of 25 per cent.

During the slump of 1929 and the early 1930's British car output was hit less severely than that of many other countries. It fell by 15 per cent, whereas in North America the fall was as much as 75 per cent. The reduction in British purchasing power was somewhat less than in several capitalist states. The previous slow growth of car ownership, coupled with the cheapening of the value of vehicles as a result of mass production, allowed car manufacture to play a part as a stimulant in the eventual revival of the market.

By 1937 output was twice than of 1929, in contrast to North America, where the 1929 total was not again reached before the hostilities of 1941. The number of models forced into the market increased each year and there was a chronic lack of standardisation.

The number of independent car-making firms in Great Britain fell to twenty. Six of them produced 90 per cent of the cars (Nuffield, Austin, Ford, Vauxhall, Rootes and Standard—several of them mergers, with Vauxhall, American-owned since 1928, also the largest producer of commercial vehicles).

The main effect of the Second World War was to increase abruptly the capacity of the industry. An important but short-lived side-effect was to expand very greatly the scope for producing commercial vehicles, tractors and machinery powered by petrol or oil.

After 1945 private car production grew rapidly. By 1950 it stood at one-third above the 1937 level. Tractor output was six times the pre-war figure. Shortage of steel acted as an adverse factor in 1951 and the general rise in vehicle production has proved remarkably erratic in recent years.

	Passenger Cars ('000)	*Commercial Vehicles* ('000)
1949	412	216
1950	523	261
1951	476	258
1952	448	242
1953	595	239
1954	769	269
1955	898	340
1956	708	297
1957	861	288
1958	1,052	313
1959	1,190	370
1960	1,353	458
1961	1,004	460
1962 (est.)	1,200	400

Monopoly

The main feature of the post-war years has been the trend to monopoly within the industry.

Between 1954 and 1961 the assets owned by the top twenty firms increased from 76 per cent to 88 per cent of the total. In the private car field itself—the heart of the industry—there are still about a score of separate firms, but fewer than half of them have any claim to independence. The "Big Five" produce 96 per cent of all British cars, but only two of the five are free from outside control. Of the others all but a handful of tiny firms making sporting and miniature cars, together with the special-quality companies of Rover and Jaguar, form part of extensive combines.

Many mergers took place during the 1950's; the most spectacular and one of the first was the establishment of B.M.C. when the two biggest firms of all, Nuffield and Austin, amalgamated in 1952. A year later B.M.C. acquired Fisher & Ludlow, the body builders, while Ford absorbed Briggs Bodies. Six other mergers with body builders occurred in the opening post-war decade, until Pressed Steel, with 40 per cent of the market, alone were left.

In 1960 Armstrong-Siddeley ceased production and Jaguar bought Daimler from B.S.A. for £3,400,000. Such a deal was quite eclipsed at the close of the year when Ford of Detroit, the American parent company, took undivided control over Ford of Dagenham for £129,000,000—the largest transaction ever known in Britain. Nor did this exhaust the year's toll of mergers; after a variety of unfortunate affairs in the romance of industry Standard-Triumph succumbed to the somewhat coercive courtship of Leyland.

The drive towards merging is an outcome of the economic processes of capitalism and the development of our motor industry has provided many examples of it.

At the outset, although a finished body may represent as much as 40 per cent of the cost of a car, those companies which lacked body-building facilities of their own made no firm move to acquire them until their sources of supply began to be threatened. Then, however, Sir William Morris made no secret of his preference for running the entire steel industry if he could. "If only I were younger," he complained.

The capture of the body-building side was swiftly completed in the post-war period. Vertical integra-

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tion took place, because of the need to guarantee controlled supplies in an expanding and competitive market.

In the conditions of the European Common Market—or of any capitalist alternative to it—there is sure to be a similar strong drive towards horizontal integration. Already there is constant talk of further big amalgamations, perhaps with service firms and petrol chains included. Price policy, marketing and servicing will decide relative progress within the Common Market. The need for their effective treatment will be a spur to integration, sell-outs and take-over bids.

Sale

The production of both cars and commercial vehicles in Britain has been easily upset because of its quick sensitivity to the market at home and abroad.

Government policy has shifted in bewildering fashion, often stimulating, frequently stifling the home market. A switchback of Bank Rate jumps, purchase taxes, credit squeezes and hire-purchase rules has thrown the industry off course on many occasions.

The fluctuation of foreign demand has been still greater. The immediate post-war effort to bridge the "dollar gap" led British exporters to try to fill the Atlantic with whisky and cars. An unnecessary and unhealthy dependence upon the American market was the only outcome for our motor industry.

The most Britain can achieve is a share of the North American market. We are powerless to determine the market's actual size. That is more or less settled by the state of the American economy. It attained its peak in 1959, when more than twice as many foreign cars were sold in the United States as in any earlier year. The U.S. "Big Three" had withheld releasing their own small cars until the market for them had grown wide enough to permit runs of some 200,000 small cars each. In 1959 it did so. Since then American compact cars have been sold in greater and greater numbers, with novel refinements and after-sale care which their foreign rivals cannot hope to match except in the very small field of high-performance sports cars. The effect on European exports has come near to being disastrous.

TOTAL SALES OF IMPORTED CARS

	U.S.A.	*Canada*
1959	600,000	113,000
1960	498,000	120,000
1961	378,000	105,000
1962 (est.)	350,000	below 100,000

After the twists of the market British car production in 1961 fell to 74 per cent of the 1960 figure, and exports, accounting for 40 per cent of total production, to as low as 65 per cent. More vehicles were exported in 1950, when the capacity of the industry was only one-third as great. Such has been the sum total of our vaunted export success.

During 1962 there have been reductions in our sales to America and in new registrations of vehicles at home, as well as 100,000 fewer spectators at the Motor Show. Price increases are becoming widespread and already stocks of new cars are half as big again as they were one year ago. The decline in home sales over the last two years will be difficult to arrest in such circumstances—a chill prospect amid the industry's ambitious plans for expansion.

Expansion

In 1958 *The Times Survey of the Motor Industry* devoted five pages to plans for new plant put under way by the "Big Five". This year it was found sufficient to allot half a page. Nevertheless, considerable schemes for expansion are continuing, although not being enlarged as they were in the 1950's.

The total of new investment already undertaken by the five giants in 1958 amounted to £150,000,000. In 1960 it was estimated £250,000,000 was at stake throughout the entire industry. Then total production of cars and trucks in Britain was 1,800,000 vehicles, exceeding the target of 1,750,000 set in the investment plan of 1955. But by 1965 the additional investment now in hand will have enlarged capacity to 3,500,000.

Almost every other car-making nation possesses similar far-reaching plans. In West Germany, to 3,700,000 units; in Europe as a whole (that is, the western fragment!), from 6,000,000 to 10,250,000. *The Economist* predicts that sales in 1965 will not be above 7,250,000, so that three-quarters of the extra capacity will lie unused.

No one should assume that such lavish plans for expansion are a sign of lively confidence. Even should a firm's share of the market be declining there remains an impetus to expand: only through expansion is there a chance of cheapening its product and winning a larger share of the market. If the entire market appears to be in danger of contraction there is an even stronger impulse to expand while it is still possible: the firm which equips itself most thoroughly with labour-saving machinery and market outlets is in the best position to retain its portion of trade and to take advantage of the difficulties facing its rivals.

Thus B.M.C. aim to produce small cars at the rate of 6,000 each week in 1963, Ford will push Cortina production to 3,000 weekly, Rootes will make 2,500 baby cars each week at Linwood and Vauxhall will enter the field on the same scale.

Our car firms, led by the "Big Five", are endeavouring to expand as if the absolute capacity of the whole market were available to absorb their products. It is not. It is curbed by numerous limits, and

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chiefly by a policy of income-cutting strenuously upheld by the big monopolists themselves.

Officially all talk is of expansion, but according to a recent article in the *Financial Times* many people in the industry take the view that in the long run there will need to be a further contraction in the number of independent car firms in the U.K.

E.E.C.

A cut in the number of British motor firms would fit the requirements of the European Economic Community, which is less cosy than its name suggests.

The majority of forecasts agree that by 1970 there will be no more than half-a-dozen giant firms devouring the market in Western Europe and its dependencies, if capitalism continues. B.M.C. will be based in Britain, Renault, Fiat and Volkswagen in France, Italy and West Germany; Ford and General Motors will straddle the frontiers. The huge American industry itself will present the main competition. Direct U.S. investment in car plants within Europe is increasing at a rate greater than 20 per cent per year. The quoted writer in the *Financial Times* concluded with three questions: What will be the world strategy of Ford and G.M. when Europe is a single market? How will they apportion work between Dagenham and Cologne, Vauxhall and Opel? What pricing policies will be decreed from Detroit?

A limited number of specialist manufacturers would also survive, no doubt. It is open to question whether Rootes and Standard, for example, could continue as makers of a complete range of vehicles. They and others might well be forced to specialise and, therefore, to reduce.

What motives prompt the desire of our big vehicle manufacturers to enter the Common Market? The Hon. Brian Rootes explains: ". . . there is no indication at present that we can return to high selling levels in North America . . . inevitably we must turn to Western Europe as the only other free major region for the sale of home-manufactured British vehicles."

Two points are clear. The British motor industry is preparing to enter the Common Market in a state of comparative weakness, certainly not in irresistible strength. And, far from seeking any freedom of choice, a blind eye is turned to the rest of the world. The less-developed two-thirds is ignored. A potential market of 2,000 million people eager to advance is dismissed.

Further, it is plain that the leaders of the industry see no alternative to persisting uncertainty. The American market no one can predict, our Commonwealth exports fell last year from 56 per cent to thirty-five per cent of our total, the Common Market is an unknown field.

In attempting to match its Common Market competitors the British industry faces several special handicaps. Before last autumn's cut in the full rate of purchase tax from 45 per cent to 25 per cent, tax amounted to 38 per cent of the basic retail price of a car in Britain. Despite Maudling's measure, which was intended to enlarge the domestic market even more than to combat continental imports, as high home sales tend to cheapen costs and thus help export, our tax burden remains above the 24 per cent in France, the 13 per cent in West Germany and the 10 per cent in Italy.

Yet in spite of the oppressive level of taxation on British vehicles very little is spent on improving British roads. In 1961 our expenditure on highways was the seventh highest in the world, though we possess the second highest number of cars. The United States spent £4,000,000,000, compared with our £200,000,000, the French £250,000,000 and the West German £530,000,000. Our neglect of our roads is, of course, an added deterrent to the expansion of the home market.

A severe and unexpected disadvantage Britain would face in the Common Market is the fact that our continental competitors will find many more retail outlets in our country than we in theirs. Sheffield, for instance, is roughly comparable to Lyons in size and character, but it has 50 per cent more motor agents.

Automation

Automatic processes, especially simple transfer machines, have been introduced steadily in the British industry since the start of the 1950's. The 1961 *Times Survey* spoke frankly of their effect: ". . . manpower employed should gradually decline . . . the recession and the recovery from it (1960–61) provided opportunities of making economies that might otherwise have been difficult to bring about."

From 1948 to 1958 vehicle production increased by two-and-a-half times, the number of workers by a quarter. A later rise in production was accomplished with fewer workers and in the United States, making a rough comparison with 1950, half the workers are now making twice the cars.

On 22 March 1956 the *Birmingham Post* carried the headline, "More Dustmen in Birmingham. Result of Car Firms' Redundancy." Under capitalism, automation and technical progress in general tend to depress the standard of the highest-paid workers, to put skill at a discount. The trade union movement holds the responsibility for protecting and enhancing the condition of its members in the present age as in the past.

At first there were some signs that effective action might be taken. The General Council submitted a fourteen-page document to the 1956 T.U.C., which

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also carried a resolution from the E.T.U. calling for prior discussion before automation was applied to jobs, for training in new skills and for no redundancy. However, this policy was not put into practice on any appreciable scale.

At the 1957 T.U.C. a resolution was passed calling for automation to be controlled, within a planned and expanding economy, for the benefit of the community.

After two blank years the only reference paid to the question at the 1960 T.U.C. was to be found in the General Council's Report: "It would be unwise to over-dramatise automation."

In 1961 there was again no statement of T.U.C. policy on automation whatever, although it was represented at further national conferences on the subject—normally by Mr. William Carron.

Last September it was briefly reported to the Congress that the General Council "had again invited the views and experiences of affiliated organisations". In debate a motion was put forward calling for consultation before automation and a three-point safeguard: (a) redundant workers to remain on the payroll until alternative work is found; (b) increased wages from increased production; (c) a shorter working week. It was remitted to the General Council.

Militancy

The facts of the matter make it obvious that everyone concerned with the welfare of car workers should press vigorously for unyielding opposition to redundancy, for prior consultation in detail, for both re-training and apprenticeship schemes, for a 40-hour week with a 35-hour four-shift week for night-work, for special attention to safety and for other appropriate demands whenever automation is in the offing.

The militancy of motor workers is not in doubt. Too rarely have they received the fighting leadership fit to match their own fighting spirit. The one-day stoppages in the engineering industry were supported wholeheartedly in all the motor factories involved. A succession of struggles during subsequent months has revealed once more the determination of motor workers to defend their rights and to resist victimisation.

It is very doubtful if the trade union movement is now giving, or able to give, adequate guidance to the multitude of important struggles taking place constantly inside the car industry. Shop stewards' organisations frequently function as a powerful day-to-day leadership, but are often forced to conduct their essential activity in isolation from their fellows in other factories. At the same time, and partly as a consequence, attendance at trade union branches is sometimes extremely low and their active role negligible.

A glance at an analysis of British industry is convincing proof that the vehicle section justifies the claim of many workers that it warrants special treatment within the structure of the major trade unions. An operative leadership, close to the shop-floor, is lacking in many cases.

Most vital is the need to build solidarity between the different parts of a fast changing industry. Factories are now being erected in many regions of the country where wage-rates and earnings are significantly lower than in the existing car industry. In a number of these, efforts to secure satisfactory rates before the opening of the new factories have not been wholly successful. Clearly, further action taken by one group of workers in their own interests cannot adversely affect the interests of their fellow-workers if solidarity is built. It is failure to establish solidarity that splits the working class.

Change

Despite the refusal of our motor bosses to recognise any market but one of their own choosing the world is changing and radically revising old patterns of production, consumption and trade. Newly-independent countries cover half the earth's surface. They are hungry for transport and machinery.

Into the new markets we have sent a trickle of Land Rovers to China. Trade with the Commonwealth is down, not up. No new types of product have been designed to explore the fresh avenues thrown open.

If the British motor industry is to flourish it too must change. It is fashionable to garnish the prospect of joining the Common Market with phrases about challenge and excitement. A more gripping and worthwhile adventure will be ours now if we begin to transform our vehicle industry into a real *all-round motor industry*.

The crying need of most of the world is for a stream of commercial transport. There is also a great unsatisfied and almost untapped demand for motor-powered machinery. Is it beyond the scope of the British industry to adjust itself in a world that has changed?

A faint hint of the new element in life penetrated the 1961 *Times Survey* with its admission that "a stabilising influence during the recession (of 1960–61) was the fact that demand for commercial vehicles was maintained throughout the period". There is no reason why British production of trucks and tractors should not rise to a million every year. Such a rise, boldly undertaken during the next five years, would utilise the vast new capacity being created today.

To sell such quantities of commercial vehicles would bring lasting prosperity and banish insecurity if it were a key part of a planned programme of foreign trade. Great changes in the motor industry would be necessary.

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In the initial stages of development the basis of the new market would be local demand in the emergent countries of Africa and Asia, assisted by long-term credit from Britain. Possibly loans would be required at home too, in order to aid motor firms in diversifying their form of production. Such a policy would come naturally to a government pursuing a peaceful course, cutting its arms bill and spending its resources wisely. Yet under any British government the benefits of a changed trading policy would be immense; they could be achieved through nationalisation of the motor industry.

Nationalisation under capitalism will not solve at a stroke all or any of the problems facing motor workers and their industry. It is the indispensable foundation for a solution.

Without nationalisation, of a new and socialist type, it would be most doubtful if the motor industry could be re-organised. Without nationalisation it would be unlikely that long-term loans from the government to less-developed countries would be forthcoming. Without nationalisation it would be virtually certain that competition and exploitation within the industry would intensify.

The Common Market is ringed with barriers against national economic planning. Because of its restriction of the rights of free and sovereign peoples, because of its economic effects and because of its encouragement of international monopolies it must be resolutely opposed by all who wish to achieve prosperity and social progress. Change there must be, but change to planned economy engaged in expanding trade with the most rapidly developing parts of the world. No other path can ensure stability and full employment for British motor workers.

While Article 222 of the Treaty of Rome expressly sanctions free choice in the matter of ownership of industry, the implication of the Treaty for Britain is that wage-costs must be reduced and private ownership correspondingly strengthened. In hostility to subsidies and government aid Article 3 lays down that all industries must be run so that "competition shall not be distorted".

Won't competition be distorted when there are just six big car firms left? Will competition be free when they are the acknowledged price-leaders and policy-makers? How free will Europe be under Detroit? The Treaty of Rome does not say.

To create an all-round motor industry, with its accent on the requirements of new markets, demands long-term planning and the power to carry it into execution. Only within the framework of nationalisation can the planning of production and finance go together in a satisfactory and advancing form. Entry into the Common Market may delay planned development, impede nationalisation, strengthen monopoly and prolong exploitation.

Certainly the nature of the E.E.C. is to oppose and to obstruct progressive policies. If Britain joins, our motor industry will be tied to a dangerous and outworn conception of striving for unlimited expansion in a limited market.

In or out, British motor workers will encounter fresh and testing struggles. They will find no effective substitute for a consistent campaign in support of their basic interests, with clear conclusions drawn from the new features now becoming prominent—

(i) the changing character of world demand;
(ii) the accelerating monopolisation of the industry throughout Britain and the capitalist world;
(iii) the rising militancy of motor workers, at home and internationally;
(iv) the organic need for re-organisation, nationalisation and planned foreign trade.

Communists and other progressive car workers have come to grasp the need to link their day-to-day struggles with a clear-sighted political battle for changes in the policy of our country. There is no alternative to political action. It becomes more necessary and appropriate with every new development in the industry. A strong working-class party is the car worker's finest weapon.

To fight to end the rotten waste of capitalism, to win freedom from insecurity and to gain a good life —these are aims inseparable from the struggle to achieve a prosperous future for our motor industry. They are aims upheld by the Communist Party, where all who desire them will find a place.

MARXISM TODAY FORUM

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Michael Tippett Alan Bush

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Thoughts on the Edinburgh Festival

Honor Arundel

WHEN I was at school one of the punishments was to stay in and write an essay on Saturday afternoon. And all our essays began in the same way. "There are many kinds of..." So I shall start this essay "There are many kinds of festivals: youth festivals, jazz festivals, music festivals, theatre festivals, labour festivals; productions of the classics with famous names; amateur productions of Gilbert and Sullivan; Yehudi Menuhin in a concert hall; folk singers in a pub.

The only Festival I have personal knowledge of is the Edinburgh International Festival. At first the Scots were highly suspicious of this expensive junketing; angry letters were written in *The Scotsman* about "expensive frills"; ratepayers grumbled; ordinary inhabitants shuddered as they heard those loud, brash, transatlantic accents: "How long does this Festival *last*, Mom?" "We're nearly at the end of the second week, honey."

But after sixteen years the Festival has a secure place in the life of the country and it's worth assessing its achievements.

East-West Friendship

Its most important achievement is that it has helped to create friendship between countries, especially between East and West. This has always been particularly noticeable in the Film Festival, which used to run independently but is now an official part of the Festival. The Soviet Union and the People's Democracies send in their best contributions which give a more vivid picture of life under socialism than any number of articles and speeches.

A great number of these films have naturally been war films, reminding people not only of the horrors of war but of the origin and character of fascism. Films like the East-German-Bulgarian *Stars* and Czechoslovakia's *Romeo, Juliet and the Darkness*, with their deep compassion and their absence of overt gong-crashing propaganda are still talked about. And perhaps the best proof that life under socialism is constantly improving and that the grim days are over, are the new kind of gay comedies coming from the East. At the most recent Festival Rumania enchanted us all with a crazy Marx brother-Marxist satire on, of all subjects, the H-bomb, *A Bomb is Stolen*. We were also enchanted with the sturdy impudent little heroine of the Soviet lumber camp comedy *The Lasses* and with mixture of lyricism and satire in the Czech *Love Without Words*. These films were gay, warm, tender—qualities which have almost entirely disappeared from British and American comedies. And the variety of subject matter and treatment refute the idea that socialist realism is a dry formula in which stiff-upper-lipped heroes defeat wicked bureaucrats or jolly workers exceed their production norms.

Musically too, there was a dizzy array of distinguished artists from the East. David Oistrakh, Rostropovich and Galina Vishnevskaya made music lovers breathless with admiration. Shostakovich was, of course, the lion of the occasion with performances of twenty-six of his works, symphonies, chamber music and piano music. His modesty and reticence enraged the publicity-hunting journalists, though at the last moment he pacified them by giving a press conference. One pressman, indeed, suggested that Shostakovich had "walked out" of a concert rather than listen to Stravinsky. Lord Harewood himself denied that this was the case.

There is absolutely no doubt that this East-West cultural exchange does an enormous amount to combat prejudice and hostility. It is a living proof of the possibility not only of co-existence but of positive friendship.

Scotland at the Festival

But friendship is a two-way process and one of the criticisms justly levelled at the Festival is that not enough is done to present a Scottish shop-window, and to allow our visitors to appreciate the Scottish tradition in the arts. There are a number of gifted contemporary painters but there has never yet been a specific exhibition of their work. Francis George Scott is a distinguished musician whose settings of songs by Hugh McDiarmid, Burns and others are original and dynamic but there has not yet been a recital of his works.

Perhaps this is the result of conceit: "Och, the foreigners wouldn't understand," or diffidence: "We can't compete with world names," on the part of the Scots. Perhaps it is because of the lack of interest in the Scottish tradition on the part of the Festival organisers. But the undoubted success of the Scottish plays so far presented should make them think again. David Lyndsay's magnificent *Satyre of the*

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Three Estaits, a medieval morality play in which King Humanity is led astray by the Seven Vices, in which the dignitaries of the Church are unmasked, and in which John the Commonweal earns the right to representation, filled the Assembly Hall. So did Sydney Goodsir Smith's *The Wallace*. And Robert McLellan, one of our best-known playwrights, had crowded houses for *The Flooers of Edinburgh* (done the year before last) and for *Young Auchinleck* (done this year). There was certainly no question of the foreigners not understanding. In fact the curious thing is that it is the English and some of the Scots themselves who pretend that Scots is difficult to understand. No one else appears to have any trouble. Instead of congratulating themselves on the advantages of being bi-lingual, the Scots continue the dreary old arguments of whether or not it is permissible in Scots. As Hugh McDiarmid says:

> "I write in English and now in Scots
> To the despair of friends who plead
> For consistency."

Why be consistent? Why not write in both?

Youth in Evidence

It is worth recalling that one of the first reviewers of Robert Burns' poetry said: "We regret that these poems are written in some measure in an unknown tongue, which must deprive most of our readers of the pleasure they would otherwise naturally create; being composed in the Scottish dialect. . . ." Although the situation is not the same today it is still a fact that the two contemporary writers who have achieved international fame and been translated into several languages are Hugh McDiarmid and Alexander Reid whose best-known work has been written in this so-called "unknown tongue."

But of course all the participators in the Festival are not inspired by the ideals of international friendship. The shopkeepers trick out their windows with horrid tartan dainties as well as expensive cashmere twinsets and fleecy rugs; hotel-keepers enjoy the pleasing prospect of foreigners ready for the fleecing; coffee bars and late night dives spring up overnight; those indefatigable elderly ladies with blue rinses and determined jaws go celebrity hunting; Society looks out its tails and tiaras for the big Establishment receptions, garden parties and first nights.

It is this aspect of the Festival which incites the honest working man or woman to turn up their noses in righteous proletarian disdain.

Yet for the genuine music lover and theatre addict, in fact for anyone with any interest in the arts at all, the Festival provides an unparalleled feast. We have the opportunity of seeing new productions of the classics, new plays, concerts of known and unknown works, opera, ballet, art exhibitions, films, the lot. And on the Fringe, youth from all over the country, with their jeans and duffel coats, their nail-scissor haircuts and enormous sweaters, arrive with a burning zeal and determination to win a share of fame for their particular subject.

The Student Dramatic Societies concentrate largely on the *avante garde* playwrights, Cocteau, Ionesco, Becket and Adamov, and as theatrically Edinburgh is usually disgracefully behind the times, this gives us a chance of seeing and evaluating these works.

The jazz and folk song enthusiasts cram themselves into cellars known as The Place or The Howff and listen insatiably until two or three o'clock in the morning. Poetry readings, from ladylike affairs in drawing rooms to rough and tumble affairs in dingy basements where the long-haired and leather jacketed brigade congregate, are well-attended. At the risk of sounding priggish and intolerant (though it may just be age) I must admit that this so-called "beat" poetry leaves me bored and disgusted. The only poem I can remember off-hand and the author must forgive me if I am misquoting is: "I love you! You love me! BONG!" Still. . . .

Youth, in fact, is very much in evidence on the Fringe and the late night revues usually have a left-wing political slant that is welcomely astringent. I remember a delightful skit taking off a Dr. Beeching of the Health Service: "We're going to axe all hospitals with less than 5,000 beds . . . and reserve the remaining ones for multi-disease patients. Single-disease patients must rot at home."

On a frivolous and personal level I like the trappings of the Festival; the gewgawish lights in Princes Street; the floodlighting on the Castle, on the noble edifice of The Bank of Scotland, on the Gothic birthday cake of the Scott Memorial. I like the crowds; the discussions; the fierce controversies and the way we suddenly realise that 11 p.m. is not the time for going to bed but for drinking in the Festival Club, going to an after-the-theatre party or sitting Parisian-like in a cafe and watching the crowds go by.

The Labour Movement

But Edinburgh does not of course entirely consist of foreign visitors, students, middle-class intelligentsia, journalists and actors. There are miners, building-trade workers, railwaymen, printers and brewery workers. There is a Trades Council, a Labour Party, a Communist Party. What is their attitude to the Festival?

About ten years ago an *ad hoc* committee was set up consisting of representatives of the organised Labour movement, plus some individuals. The Festival proper, it decided, was for nobs and snobs. The Labour movement should make its own distinctive contribution—and the People's Festival was born.

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It sponsored plays like Ewan McColl's *Uranium 235*, ran concerts of folk song and organised lectures and poetry readings in which, of course, Hugh McDiarmid played a leading part. Unfortunately, owing to political quarrels, the Committee disintegrated and though from time to time resolutions are passed and plans discussed nothing further has been done.

With the ideas of Centre 42 very much in the air and with the Labour movement beginning to realise that culture is not something that should be put in cold storage until the socialist millennium, I think we should consider very carefully exactly what we mean and want.

Exactly in what way should the Labour movement participate? I think we should spend far more energy in supporting and encouraging the existing organisations and events. The Festival in Edinburgh for instance has, in the last ten years, become much broader in appeal and there are few tastes it does not cater for. It is very unlikely that the Labour movement could compete in quality with the official and semi-official events. And we should avoid at all costs the sort of event that people have to attend out of loyalty because it has been sponsored by some working class organisation. The idea that there is something bad called "Bourgeois Culture" and something good called "Working Class Culture" is dying. Times have changed. Some of the battles we fought have been won and it is perhaps typical of the left-wing movement that we do not even celebrate the victories.

Arnold Wesker, Alan Sillitoe, Ewan McColl have all been accepted. Hugh McDiarmid, once scorned and sneered at, and without altering one jot his forthright communist opinions, has been officially recognised as Scotland's greatest poet. Citizens Theatre, Glasgow, presents Brecht's *The Good Woman of Setzuan*; The Gateway, Edinburgh, presents O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock*.

Burns' Nichts

Perhaps it would be useful at this point to mention some of the contributions the Communist Party has made in which it has transformed a popular tradition. Take Burns' Nichts for instance. Throughout Scotland, on and around January 26, in pubs, hotels, village halls, and clubs, the people of Scotland eat haggis, drink whisky, recite *To a Mouse* and *To a Haggis*, sing *Rantin Rovin Robin* and *My Nannie's Awa* and listen to some fulsome appreciation of the life and work of Robert Burns. In the village where I used to live, containing 653 voters, there were three Burns' Suppers, two run by the local pubs and one by the Women's Rural Institute. There used to be bitter quarrels as to who should have the honour of reciting *Tam o' Shanter* or *Holy Willie's Prayer*.

At the other end of the social scale there are Burns' Suppers addressed by visiting foreign dignitaries, in which evening dress is obligatory and in which Burns is portrayed as the simple heaven-taught ploughman beloved by the patronising gentry. You get the impression that they praise Burns not because he wrote well but because he managed to write at all. His fondness for whisky, girls, dumb animals and flowers makes tough-headed businessmen sob in their cups.

> "Mair nonsense has been uttered in his name
> Than in ony's barrin' liberty and Christ,"

as Hugh McDiarmid says.

But the Communist Party realised that embedded in this confusion and sentimentality was a vital spark and decided to run Burns' Nichts of its own in which the traditional ritual would be observed but in which an uncompromising Marxist interpretation of Burns' work would be embodied.

McDiarmid

Burns' radicalism, his sympathy with the ideas of the French Revolution, his attacks on the gentry and the sanctimonious "Unco guid" with or without dog-collars, his realistic compassionate descriptions of Scottish life were brought into the foreground and the esoteric discussions of whether Highland Mary or Jean Armour was the great love of his life were allowed to fade decently into the background.

It is now generally recognised that the Burns' Suppers, run by the Party or by other working-class organisations are on a higher level than any of the others. There ought to be special mention of the Bowhill miner's People's Burns' Club event, but, shame on them, they do not invite women so I've never been.

This is all something we should be very proud about. It has not been pioneer work but we have taken advantage of a popular tradition and given it new life and meaning.

But this can, in turn, fall into stagnation and complacency. Burns is not the only Scottish poet and an unreal veneration of his work leads us to despise and undervalue the work of others.

Particularly is this true of our attitude to the works of Hugh McDiarmid. McDiarmid is and has been a communist for many years and has carried on a lonely and heroic battle often without the very allies he deserves. He is not an easy poet and his poetry is as different from Burns as thistles are from roses but then he was born into a very different society, one in which poetry is despised or ignored, where there is no living tradition of popular poetry and in which, in spite of universal education, the mass of the people have never been so philistine and so illiterate.

Most poets have given up and talk to their friends.

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and relations about small matters, but McDiarmid has stubbornly insisted upon talking at the top of his voice, on all the important questions of the day and without ever condescending to intelligences less than his, as if the mass of the people *were* listening and *were* interested in poetry, national independence, artistic integrity and Marxism.

He has an uncomfortable habit of saying the right thing at the wrong moment or to the wrong people but there has never been any question of where his true allegiance lies—and yet it is only after he received a doctorate from Edinburgh University and had programmes devoted to his works on radio and television that the Party has fully realised that he is a credit to it and one of the most glorious ornaments they have ever had.

This neglect was at least partly remedied by the fact that the Party in Scotland organised a splendid celebration for his seventieth birthday in Edinburgh in which he was officially acclaimed and *fêted*, his poetry read and his songs sung. He had a lot of birthday celebrations but this was the only one where a Marxist interpretation of his works was given and where he was given his rightful place in the international communist movement.

What I am trying to say is that the Marxist attitude to Burns and McDiarmid is substantially different from the common or garden blah, that this is a field where the Party has a specific contribution to make, and which cannot be done better by any other organisation.

Folk Song Tradition

Another tradition into which the Party and Labour movement have injected new life is the folk song tradition. The People's Festival was the first organisation to run successful ceilidhs and to introduce splendid folk singers like Jeannie Robertson and Jimmy McBeth. Here there has been another victory. Folk song has regained its popularity. Hardly an event is organised in the Labour movement without its group of folk singers, and folk song discs run practically level in popularity with pop.

In Scotland we have a particularly rich heritage of traditional songs which are still sung by ordinary people at parties and in pubs—but mostly by the older generation.

Since the folk song revival the youth have made it particularly their province and the fantastically uncomfortable surroundings in which hundreds of young people squatted to hear Robin Hall and Jimmy McGregor during the Festival needs to be seen to be believed.

What is more there are dozens of new songs being composed, or at least new words to old songs, and any Aldermaston marcher will vouch for the verve and earthy humour of the Scottish anti-Polaris songs. A tradition has not only been kept alive but given new vigour and relevance.

But here again there is a danger—the limiting view that culture begins and ends with folk song which can foster prejudice against the more complex and profound forms of art.

There is no simple clear-cut formula to encourage the Labour movement's participation in the Arts. The problem cannot be solved by plonking down a ready-made festival in an industrial town though that may well be a step in the right direction. A particularly fruitful line of work appears to be being done in the North East Association for the Encouragement of the Arts. Here local authorities, trades councils, trade unions, individuals and cultural organisations have joined together to organise support for existing theatre and music and to encourage activity of all kinds. They plan to run a magazine, to buy works of sculpture and pictures, to give awards to promising writers and artists.

More Labour Support

Such an association would be particularly suitable for Scotland. In the meantime I would like to see less prejudice and hostility by the working class towards such events as the Edinburgh Festival and the cultural possibilities that already exist. More characters like that group of Fife miners who regularly come through for concerts and ballet; more getting together of groups to visit the best musical and theatrical events. (Not all the prices are prohibitive.)

And when Scottish theatres have the sense to put on plays by Brecht, O'Casey, Wesker and Ewan McColl they deserve all the support we can give them.

Could not the Edinburgh Trades Council ask for representation on the Festival Committee, press for the inclusion of the sort of entertainment they want, have arrangements for block bookings at reduced prices?

It was due to the natural benevolence and imagination of Menuhin and Oistrakh rather than from any pressure from the Labour movement that they gave their services free to present a concert for schoolchildren and old age pensioners in one of Edinburgh's biggest and most arid housing estates.

In the last analysis it is we, the audience, who have helped to transform the Festival from the cosy affair for nobs and snobs and we can transform it still further.

And it is worth doing because in spite of commercial interests, in spite of official pomp and circumstance the Festival makes a positive contribution to our artistic understanding and education, to international friendship and peace.

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Psychology and Education

Sam Fisher

This article, like those by Eric Lunzer and Brian Simon in the two preceding issues of "Marxism Today", is based on a paper read by the author at a Symposium on "Education and Psychology" held by the National Cultural Committee of the Communist Party.

THE state of educational psychology is no narrow specialist affair of importance only to experts. The private ownership of capital apart, the educational system is the chief device whereby the ruling class perpetuates its social and economic privilege. Orthodox educational psychology provides the theoretical justification both for educational privilege and educational deprivation and, indeed, for the class structure itself by implicitly equating it with the distribution of intelligence.

The need of the ruling class for such subtle rationales is comparatively recent and corresponds to its growing defensiveness in face of rising democratic feeling and working class pressure. Brian Simon in his masterly work *Studies in The History of Education* 1780-1870 (Lawrence and Wishart, 1960) has shown us how the attitude of the bourgeoisie towards education has undergone changes corresponding to changes in its class position. For a brief period, intoxicated by the possibilities for humanity of the industrial revolution, radical bourgeois industrialists, scientists and educationists demanded education for all children and began to develop a pedagogical science based on the concept that all children are educable. In the early nineteenth century, sobered by the French Revolution and the rise of working class radicalism, the bourgeois radicals concentrated on the demand for education suited to the needs of middle class children. But it was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that the bourgeoisie were able to secure the reform of education, by which time they had achieved social and political supremacy and were an increasingly conservative force. Between 1850 and 1870, by a series of commissions and parliamentary Acts, their political representatives proceeded with ruthless energy to create a rigidly stratified educational structure, ousting the children of the poor from the old foundations, consolidating the public schools as a monopoly of the Establishment, and the other foundations as grammar schools, for the middle class (three levels—higher, middle, and lower!) and finally in 1870 creating the state elementary schools for working class children.

With no serious challenge as yet to their supremacy, the bourgeoisie had no need to conceal their class purposes by resort to pseudo scientific theoretical justifications. What is much more remarkable is that, despite the rise of the Labour movement and the swelling of democratic criticism, this same stratified system, with only comparatively minor liberal modifications, remains, in essence, unchanged.

"Educational Ladder"

How has this system been perpetuated? Within a few years of the formation of the Labour Party in 1900, the simple but remarkably effective device of the "educational ladder" was introduced, i.e., the "creaming off" of a tiny minority of the most readily educable working class and lower middle class children by means of the "scholarship" and free places in the grammar school. For nearly forty years, the establishment was able, not only to recruit, and safely de-class, the additional middling cadres needed in a capitalist economy, but also to divert the working class movement from its traditional demand for full educational opportunity for all children to the much more limited and confused one for more grammar school places for "bright" working class children. Thus faced by no serious challenge, the then Board of Education did not find it necessary to cover reactionary educational practice by a smokescreen of false educational theory.

However, after 1918, in the "land fit for heroes", progressive teachers, parents and the Labour movement began to realise that they had been sold a pup. The demand for "secondary education for all" was raised again. With the Labour movement hamstrung by the defeat of the General Strike in 1926 and the MacDonald betrayal in 1931, the day of reckoning was postponed. Nevertheless the upsurge of democratic feeling during the war against fascism and the mass agitation led by the National Union of Teachers, allied to the T.U.C., the Co-operative Union, and the Workers' Education Association in the Council for Educational Advance, forced through the Education Act of 1944 which wrote

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the principle of "secondary education for all" on to the statute book.

The 1944 Act, and the election of a Labour government in 1945, placed the Ministry of Education, as a consistent part of the permanent, reactionary state machine, in a dilemma. However, the subtle pundits of the Ministry had long anticipated this dilemma. As soon as the demand for "secondary education for all" was raised again in the 1920's, they began to display an unwonted interest in educational psychology, seeking an up-to-date "scientific" justification for the retention of the educational *status quo*.

Psychometry and Streaming

They found the weapon they sought in the theory and practice of psychometry or intelligence testing. This was particularly astute because the psychometrists regarded themselves, and were generally regarded, as progressive critics of the scholarship system which favoured the favourably environed and well-coached child. However, beneath this seeming progressiveness and the appearance of objectivity suggested by the statistical methods employed, lay a basic assumption, the doctrine of "fixed abilities". It was the fundamentally reactionary and fatalistic nature of this dogma which attracted the attention of the Ministry pundits. It assumes, without adducing any scientific evidence, that abilities are inborn and unchangeable, that they can be measured by intelligence tests, and, again without evidence, that they are distributed according to the "normal" curve, i.e. a few with high ability, a few with low, and a mass grouped symmetrically round the average, and that the range of ability is so wide as to constitute different categories of ability with only the top category of children capable of real secondary education.

This doctrine was first given the stamp of official approval in the Hadow reports on primary and secondary education. The authority on British psychometry, Sir Cyril Burt, wrote an introduction to the primary report which proposed for the first time in the State schools, the "streaming" of children and their education to different levels of attainment. The secondary report, arguing from the notion of different types or categories of children, advocated the creation of different categories of secondary schools.

The reorganisation of the all-age elementary schools into junior and senior elementary schools which followed, was a partial concession to the notion of "secondary education for all". But since it was carried out in the shadow of the Hadow Report, the doctrine of fixed abilities was built into the educational system. At the same time it became the foundation of the doctrine propounded at university departments of education and training colleges, and by His Majesty's inspectorate. Thus when the 1944 Act was passed the means of subverting its declared aims lay to hand. For almost a whole generation, teachers, educationists and school managers had been reared in the notion that only a minority of children were in any full sense educable at the secondary stage. Worse still, streaming, now securely established in the primary schools, together with crowded classes and inadequate staffing, had given rise to a fantastic range of attainment which in the eyes of most teachers, educationists and the public seemed to provide an irrefutable case for this notion and, therefore, for selection at eleven plus.

By 1944, then, all that was needed to hoodwink the public and cheat the children was a change of nomenclature from "senior elementary" to "secondary modern", and to contrive a means of selection which could claim scientific validity. At this point intelligence tests came into their own, being employed almost everywhere as a major and sometimes decisive part of the selection process. The doctrine of fixed abilities had more than fulfilled its reactionary promise.

Critique of Selection

Of course, as readers of *Marxism Today* well know, there has developed in the last ten years a growing revolt against the artificial limitations so skilfully imposed on children and the schools. While in part spontaneous, this revolt has been very largely led by Marxist educationists and teachers, who have developed a penetrating critique of the theory and practice of intelligence testing, of secondary selection and of streaming, exposing their unscientific character, the educational deprivation which they perpetuate, and the socio-political motives which underly the Ministry's sponsorship of them.

This critique, confirmed by the day to day experience of teachers and parents, and imbued as it is with a positive, humanist and optimistic approach, has had a very considerable impact in the world of education and on the public. Intelligence testing has been under fire from all sides, and secondary selection is very largely discredited. The resulting discussion has contributed decisively to the emergence of new trends in education: the beginnings of non-streamed organisation in some primary schools, the creation of comprehensive schools and a certain loosening of the rigid distinctions in secondary education.

These trends are extremely significant, but their

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limited growth leaves no room for complacency. Secondary selection remains almost universal. A few authorities who claim to have abolished the "Eleven plus" have in fact only replaced it by a series of similar tests spread over one or two years. Intelligence tests, sometimes as an empty concession re-named Verbal Aptitude or Academic Ability tests, remain an important and even decisive element in the selection process.

In 1961, the Ministry listed only 137 comprehensive schools, of which 58 were in London, 32 in Wales, 27 in twelve English counties and 20 in nine English county boroughs, catering in all for 4.7 per cent of secondary school population. Including the "bilateral" and other secondary schools of the comprehensive type, Dr. Pedley has estimated a grand total of 200 schools providing comprehensive education for perhaps one in twelve children. The revolt in the secondary modern schools against the limitations imposed upon them has resulted in more and more providing extended courses to 16, including G.C.E. courses, but the inferior allowances for books and equipment and the shortage of suitably qualified staff, of science laboratories and other facilities has restricted the new opportunities to a minority of pupils, often at the expense of the majority.

Comprehensive Schools

This slow progress is to a considerable degree a measure of the determined resistance of the Ministry of Education and reactionary local authorities to educational reform. The inclusion, among the latter, of many Labour authorities indicates the failure effectively to mobilise the Labour movement for educational advance. However, it also indicates a failure on our part fully to develop the educational implications of our critique of selection, above all, to make a frontal assault on the underlying doctrine of "fixed abilities" and to elaborate a positive and scientific alternative.

Consequently, much of the opposition to selection and support for the comprehensive school is purely empirical. It does not reject "fixed abilities" which seem "commonsense", but maintains, from practical experience, that it is impossible to assess them at 10-plus, that no selection machinery can measure or predict accurately, that selection always results in a substantial misplaced "borderline" of children, that there are "late developers" whose "innate abilities" have not yet manifested themselves.

From this standpoint, the supreme *educational* virtue of the comprehensive school is that it provides continuous opportunity for the "borderline" and the "late developers"; for the "less able" it possesses only *"social"* value in that it eliminates the social distinctions of segregation and the psychological stigma of eleven-plus failure. In essence this conception is only a liberalised form of tripartism. It excludes the possibility of *substantially* raising the standards of *all* children and envisages the comprehensive school doing what the tripartite system attempts to do, i.e. to develop the varying levels of "fixed ability" to their respective maxima, but much more successfully, much less wastefully and much more humanly.

In practice, of course, given the proper conditions for comprehensive education, the very fact of bringing all children into one building, with good educational facilities and well-qualified staff, tends to break through the limitations of educational liberalism. In Anglesey, for example, where for eleven years all secondary education has been comprehensive, about three-fifths of the whole school population take Ordinary level G.C.E. with average results little short of the grammar school average (for one-fifth of the school population), and up to 20 per cent have been taking Advanced level G.C.E. with average results identical to that of the 7 or 8 per cent taking it in grammar schools.

Why then does this "liberalised tripartism" still haunt the approach of many progressive teachers? It is an empirical reaction, however superficial, to certain realities encountered in many comprehensive schools. Not many comprehensive schools enjoy the favourable circumstances of the Anglesey schools. Many suffer from severe competition from established grammar schools and are unable to secure a representative intake (though, significantly enough, in the case of some of the longer-established comprehensive schools, it is the local grammar schools which feel the pinch). This creates difficulty in establishing a "success" tradition in the early formative years of such schools. Secondly, the successes of many "eleven plus failures" in the G.C.E., entry to universities, training colleges etc., while significant, nevertheless apply only to a minority, albeit sizeable. Many comprehensive schools, especially in "difficult" districts, find that in addition to a small percentage of extremely backward children requiring full remedial education, there is a mass of children in lower and middle streams whose backwardness in specific educational attainments has become deeply entrenched by the time the secondary stage is reached. In a minority of cases, significant but still a minority, these difficulties are overcome, and the pupils proceed higher up the scale of secondary education. Many

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more would succeed, given a degree of individual tuition in smaller classes than staffing will permit. Probably most would succeed with the aid of techniques badly needed, but not yet evolved, i.e., diagnostic and remedial techniques to deal, not with the acutely backward individual child, but with mass specific retardation of the so-called "average" pupil. Certainly most of these pupils progress further than they would in the majority of secondary modern schools. As things are, however, these difficulties create an obstacle to the achievement of high standards by all children.

However, these "realities" do not vindicate selection and "fixed abilities" nor debunk the claims of the comprehensive school. The virtue of comprehensive schools is not that their creation automatically solves all problems, but that they drag these problems out of the obscurity of tripartite pigeon-holes and pose them clearly and urgently in a context where they can begin to be tackled positively. The difficulties are the legacy of a generation of tripartism and only confirm the success of the spoiling tactics employed in the past and the present by the Ministry of Education to defeat "secondary education for all".

Spoiling Tactics

The Ministry's attack was a two-pronged operation directed at both the apex and the base of the educational pyramid. The attack at the apex took the form of the replacement of the old General School Certificate examination (hitherto the main objective of grammar school pupils at 16) by the present G.C.E. examination. Alarmed lest secondary modern pupils might successfully take the School Certificate on a massive scale and thus explode the mythology of tripartism, the Ministry proposed the abolition of the School Certificate, leaving only the Higher School Certificate for grammar school pupils of 18-plus. Defeated by teacher opposition, the Ministry then insisted on a new type of external examination at 16-plus with a pass standard about half as difficult again, so that, in the words of the Beloe Report, it "would, in practice, be beyond the reach of any but selective courses" (i.e. grammar and technical schools). The Anglesey schools and many others have shown that this aim has by no means succeeded. The fact remains that it has restricted success nationally to a relatively small proportion of pupils.

However, the key attack launched by the Ministry was again the deliberate worsening of the "Cinderella" conditions in the primary schools referred to above. Crowded classes became more so with the arrival of the post-war "bulge", streaming and differential treatment were rendered even more rigid by the "eleven plus rat-race", the supply of primary teachers declined with the declining value of their salaries, and especially in recent years the lowering of their salary prospects below those of secondary teachers.

From the doctrine of "fixed abilities", other pseudo-liberal, anti-educational theories emerged rendering confusion worse confounded. The "theory of spontaneity" regarded the learning process as the spontaneous unfolding of inborn, fixed abilities, and so prohibited the teaching of reading, writing, etc. to any particular child until he or she displayed "readiness"—thus widening differences at the very start between those from educationally stimulating homes, often but not always professional middle class and those whose homes lacked stimulus of that sort, and even more those whose over-crowded, poverty-stricken homes meant lack of food, sleep and vitality. The notion of "free activities" threw upon the child the burden of finding its own way through the uncharted world of learning, guided by its own inner abilities and little else, especially when applied to classes of fifty strong or more. There is little wonder that standards, at least in the basic skills, often fell well below those in the old elementary schools and that mass backwardness has been on the increase. A survey undertaken in the L.C.C. some seven or eight years ago revealed that in the extensive older and over-crowded working class areas of London, as many as two-thirds and even three-quarters of the pupils in the secondary modern schools were backward, using as a working definition of "backwardness", attainment which is less than 85 per cent of the average for the age group. This gives a measure of the challenge facing the comprehensive schools in those areas and, incidentally, a measure of progress already made by those schools.

Teachers who used these "new" ideas were guided by a well-intentioned, albeit a somewhat confused and even desperate desire to solve educational problems. The motive underlying the Ministry's advocacy was as Machiavellian as that underlying its insistence upon a high standard G.C.E., and much more disastrous.

Unfortunately, if perhaps understandably, the attention not only of progressive educationists, the public and the press, but also of the Labour movement including the Communist Party, has been mainly focused on selection at "eleven plus" and on the tripartite system of secondary education, i.e. at the point where the technique of educational deprivation is at its clearest and most blatant.

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The failure to recognise in practice the crucial importance of the early stages of education again arises from our failure, hitherto, properly to develop a positive alternative, a theory of mental development covering the educational process as a whole. The need of children, teachers and the schools to be freed from the shackles of a false educational psychology is both clear and urgent.

Need for Scientific Theory of Education

What then needs to be done? First and foremost, of course, comes the need to mobilise the Labour movement, the teachers and progressive people generally, in an immediate and intense campaign for a radical expansion of educational opportunity, with a speedy provision of comprehensive schools and a drastic reform of conditions at the primary stage.

This, however, would only create the conditions necessary for educational progress. To make full use of the opportunity, much must be done in the field of educational theory and psychology. It is certainly necessary to develop a much more powerful critique of the doctrine of "fixed abilities". This presents no great difficulty. There is an abundance of material in the fields both of psychology and of education. There is the practical experience not only of education in the Socialist countries, not only of comprehensive schools in Britain, but in all types of schools within the increasingly discredited tripartite system.

Even more important, though closely allied, is the task of evolving a positive and coherent theory of education based on a scientific study of the processes of mental development, the learning process, the key role of language in the development of purposeful 'intelligent" thought. This must involve a close study of the increasingly extensive and detailed work done in this field by psychologists and educationists in the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries, in the light of our own conditions and experience. It also involves a critical assessment of work done in this field by Piaget and others in the West.

Only with the aid of a positive, living alternative can we loosen the "dead man's grip" of "fixed abilities" and create the conditions for a more intense and effective struggle for democratic education. For this purpose a generalised theory is not enough. We must begin to apply the developmental concepts to the many detailed and complex aspects of education starting with the parental education of the child in its first years, the role of nursery education and the need for its expansion to assist in a most crucial stage in the mental development of children. The key problem of speech development during the preschool and primary stages requires closest attention and the scientific understanding of the learning process should be applied to the teaching of reading and numbers. Where "non-streaming" is concerned, to put the case in terms of a general theory of "universal educability" is vital but only poses the issue. It is necessary to consider concretely the many problems involved, to evolve diagnostic and remedial techniques based on a scientific understanding of the process of mental development.

Given a primary education based on these principles, the difficulties at the secondary stage would be immensely reduced (although the question then arises as to whether eleven plus is the appropriate age for secondary education in any real sense). As things are, however, much of this has an immediate bearing upon the problems of the secondary stage, in particular the use of diagnostic and remedial techniques to deal with mass backwardness. More specifically at the secondary stage we must consider the best means for developing more complex forms of conceptual thinking. At this stage also, the problems of interest and motivation become more complex and thorny. This involves a radical re-assessment of the content of secondary education so as to reconcile the mastery of the basic disciplines with their laws and processes, with an understanding of their actual use in the outside world, so that they cease to be either abstract, formal and meaningless or narrowly vocational but rather become meaningful, relevant and full of interest and social significance. Allied to this is the much discussed need for a constructive alternative to the excessive and premature specialisation leading to the "Two Cultures" which quite deliberately produces people incapable of considering society as a whole critically, or, indeed, of understanding their own specialities in their true social context. Allied to this also is the notion of maintaining the desire of adolescents for education, despite their eagerness for the "outside world" by combining education with actual participation in productive labour, a subject little discussed in the West, but now increasingly the basis of education over 15 in the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries.

All this clearly amounts to a pretty formidable task for which Marxist psychologists, educationists and teachers must take a special responsibility. In tackling it, however, they need not, and should not, be alone. It is a measure of the power of Marxism and its relevance to the problems of our time, and of the bankruptcy of current bourgeois

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thought, that, when Marxism is applied to the specific problems in any field of social activity, it evokes a widespread and favourable response. No attempt to evoke a sound scientific basis for educational advance can succeeed without the widest discussion and active co-operation with progressive teachers and without drawing on the great wealth of practical experience of teachers generally. It is equally true that it cannot succeed or, indeed, even happen without the initiative of Marxist educationists and psychologists, whose work has already laid the most consistent, coherent and fruitful basis for further theoretical advance.

Discussion contribution on:

The Fight Against the Monopolies

J. R. Campbell

It is a tremendous pity that Michael McCreery in his criticism of the Communist Party document "The British People's Fight against the Monopolies" should waste time in asking a number of questions which are answered in the document itself.

"Are we to aim at restricting, containing, and breaking up these *more efficient* firms . . . or are we to aim at taking them over in the interests of the people, at Socialism? Do we present a reactionary or a progressive alternative to monopoly?" he asks.

Resisting the impulse to query the definition of the monopolies as "the more efficient firms" we refer Michael McCreery to the fact that this query is answered repeatedly in the document itself.

The document ends with the statement:

> "the immediate anti-monopoly measures which we are advocating are not intended to be a substitute for an all out decisive attack on them (the monopolies), but the starting point of a struggle which will prepare the ground for such an attack. This policy has nothing in common with that of the reformists, who want to drop nationalisation and confine themselves to minor measures of state intervention within the state monopoly capitalist framework. It is this system which the British people must destroy if they are to control their own destiny, and anti-monopoly policy is the opening of the struggle, which will lead to the achievement of that aim."

The document is not a new Party programme. It is entitled "The British People's Fight Against the Monopolies" and is concerned with answering the question whether it is possible to formulate demands for immediate action against the monopolies which will begin to move the mass of the people against these bodies.

When Michael McCreery complains that there is no mention in the document of the need to maintain or advance real wages, or "no mention of the need to reform the constitution (abolition of monarchy and Lords, proportional representation etc.)", he is hankering after a general programme, which he will find in the *British Road*. What the document is dealing with is ways and means of starting the struggle against monopolies.

"In short, in the course of the struggle against state monopoly capital, all other classes can be won to abandon those of their aims which are reactionary and throw in their lot with the working class". But the question is what stage has the struggle reached at this moment, and how can it be developed, and given a more pronounced anti-monopoly edge.

Not Propaganda But Struggle

The document is not concerned with how to conduct general propaganda against the monopolies but how to begin partial struggles against them, because it is only on the basis of such struggles that the propaganda will begin to have any real impact.

Michael McCreery's differences with the document are that he rejects the formulation of specific anti-monopoly immediate demands and he rejects resistance to particular reactionary policies of the monopolies. He fears that in putting forward such demands we will be in the same company as those who want a renovated competitive capitalism.

On the contrary, without such demands, there can be no mass struggle against the operations of monopolies and propaganda will be condemned to utter sterility.

It is the putting forward of such demands that distinguishes the Communists from sectarians of

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the S.P.G.B. type. The sectarians stress the necessity of converting the people (in fact small groups of people) by propaganda and then action will follow. We stress the fact that the struggle is going on all the time, that our demands must be of such a character that will bring increased masses into the struggle, and on that basis the battle of ideas can develop successfully.

The sectarians can demonstrate that unemployment is the product of the capitalist system of society and can only be completely eliminated by Socialism. True enough, but the Communists formulate immediate demands to deal with mass dismissals, get the workers to act against sackings at the factory level. Today the struggle against unemployment starts not when the workers have left the factory, but at the first whiff of redundancy, when they are still in the factory. The sharp reaction to unemployment that is evident today is due to the fact that we have convinced many workers that they must not bow before such "inevitabilities."

What are we to do when confronted with a large merger of the I.C.I.-Courtaulds, or Mirror-Odhams type? Display it as an example of capitalist concentration, make a formal reference to nationalisation, and let it go at that? The document says we should oppose such measures, which transfer masses of workers from one employer to another without as much as "by your leave", and which calmly inform workers that a merger having taken place, the factory where they are employed will close down at a given date.

We Cannot Stand Aside

The Communist cannot stand aside and demonstrate that this is the result of monopoly capitalism. He must rouse the workers, the shop stewards committees, the trade unions, to challenge these procedures. He must encourage all who are in any way affected by them, to come out and resist on the industrial and political plane, the right of the monopolists to "do what they like with their own". That is the meaning of the paragraph which says: "No take-over bid merger or amalgamation should be concluded, without first submitting full details to the Monopolies Commission, which should in general, not permit any take-overs if they lead in the direction of monopoly".

Michael McCreery seems to ask what would be the effect of such a measure if carried? Would it abolish or modify monopoly capitalism? But the aim of the demand is to promote struggle, to challenge the right of the capitalist firms to push people around, to deny their right to make changes which would affect the mass of the people and in the course of the agitation and struggle to raise the question of the nationalisation of monopolies.

It is a profound mistake to imagine a Government easily conceding this demand to investigate all take-overs. Both Tories and Labour in practice would give the monopolies the right to do what they like with their own.

Similarly with the various proposals for supervising and exposing the monopolies. Again Michael McCreery jumps a stage, assumes that these proposals are carried and says "that they will reveal that the monopolies are more efficient and earn higher rates of profits in general, than competitive capital".

If that was what would be revealed the monopolies would not resist. But they will bitterly resist the Monopolies Commission exposing all the relevant facts about their operations.

There are large firms whose operations affect all of us and who insist that some of the essential facts are kept a close business secret. This must be ended. So far from those Liberals and Labourists who denounce monopolies approving of such demands, they will run from them. When the Jenkins Committee was sitting it was widely predicted that the practice of shareholders concealing their identity behind nominees would be abolished. It was not. The people have to be kept outside the business secret.

Incidentally it is quite illegitimate for Michael McCreery to pick and choose from amongst the ten immediate measures on monopoly in such a way as to conceal the fact that they end with a demand for extended nationalisation. Yet it is only by doing this that he can make a case that the aim of the document "is the maintenance and restoration of competition".

In the Socialist movement at the beginning of this century, it used to be said that "the trusts are doing our work for us", i.e. they were concentrating production in larger units and making it easier for the workers to take over.

This conception embodied a dangerous half-truth. It is only to the extent that the people react to the growth of monopoly, struggle against its operations at every stage, refuse to be pushed around by it, that they will overthrow it. Without the continuous development of the anti-monopoly fight, without using every occasion for exposure, protest and struggle, the monopolists will get away with it.

It is that conception of the active role of the Party and the working class which the document underlines. It is that conception which separates us from the Liberals on the one hand and the sectarians on the other.

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How Not to Write History

Dipak Nandy

MISS IRENE COLTMAN has written a book called *Private Men and Public Causes: Philosophy and Politics in the English Civil War* (Faber, 251 pp., 30s.). A remark early on tells us what, despite the elaborate title, this book is really about. Writing of Lucius Cary, Viscount Falkland (immortalised in Clarendon's *History of the Great Rebellion* as the conscience-stricken conservative), Miss Coltman writes:

> "On both sides in the Civil War there were modern liberals like himself who wanted to be at peace with themselves and not to feel guilty." (13)

One feels, at the end, that whether or not this is true of the Civil War, it is hardly relevant to Miss Coltman's chief concern—which is not in the 17th century—but in the 20th.

Peculiar Parallels

This book should be a solemn warning on how *not* to write history. The conflict of two world-wide political systems presents the "modern liberal" with a *crise de conscience* hardly to be paralleled in history. Commitment (to whichever side) means an end to peace and the tranquil cultivation of one's back-garden; it also, of course, brings guilt, for no political movement or system is ever as unspotted as the individual liberal soul. On the other hand, non-commitment, withdrawal, refusal to choose, brings its own nemesis in guilt and the consequent loss of peace, for having staked everything on men's inalienable right to choose freely, the liberal can hardly avoid feeling guilty in opting out of choice altogether. Heads you win, tails I lose. What is one to do in this unparalleled dilemma? Why, find a parallel, of course. So Miss Coltman sets off into the 17th century, to discover that the neutrals and the reluctant conservatives in the English Revolution were *modern liberals* (just like ourselves) and facing the same agonised crisis of choice!

Miss Coltman has evidently worked hard to write this, in many ways, interesting book about three characters of the 17th century revolution who deserve to be introduced on their own merits: Edward Hyde, Lord Clarendon, Sidney Godolphin (a little known and deeply serious Cavalier poet), and the strange and fascinating Anthony Ascham. In this book they are merely pegs on which the tattered folds of the modern liberal conscience are hung out for display. For what, after all, emerges in the way of significance? That there were conservatives with a conscience on the Royalist side who did not believe one hundred per cent in their cause (like Falkland and Godolphin). And, on the other side, that there were Parliamentarians who likewise did not believe one hundred per cent in *their* cause (like Ascham). Falkland and Godolphin were killed in the fighting, their respective crises solved, after a fashion, with their deaths. Anthony Ascham resigned himself, in the manner of Hobbes, to the powers that be (*whoever* they be), and was murdered by the Royalists for his pains. This, surely, is cold comfort for modern liberals.

After 1642, political crisis and civil war brought men, whether neutral or partisan, face to face with the realities of their situation. Parliamentarians dropped the pretence that all would be well if only the King's wicked advisers were removed. Both Royalists and Parliamentarians stopped pretending that sovereignty was wielded jointly by the King, Lords and Commons (the "mixed constitution"). "The question is not, whether there shall be an arbitrary power; but the only point is, who shall have that arbitrary power, whether one man or many?" wrote Sir Robert Filmer. "The question never was whether we should be governed by arbitrary power, but in whose hands it should be," replied Albertus Warren on the other side. They were the extremists, of course, but not necessarily because their minds were coarser than those of the men Miss Coltman studies. Their statements were the statements of realists. They were realists because they perceived that conflicts of the kind they were witnessing could not be resolved except by the assumption of power—arbitrary power if necessary—by one of the two contesting forces.

"Modern Liberals"?

This tearing away of the veils and fictions from political thinking and the confrontation of the fundamental fact of political power is what makes a thinker like Anthony Ascham relevant to our times. What is important about Ascham's *Of the Confusions and Revolutions of Government* (1648) is not his despairing "Thus hath every dunghill fly a right to live", but the disenchanted acceptance of the fact of power involved in: "for

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a justifiable obedience it is best, and enough for us to consider, whether the invading party have us and the means of our subsistence in his possession". This, of course, raised more problems than it solved, which is hardly a matter for surprise. Ascham and his contemporaries ought to be studied both for their own interest and because modern political thinking begins with them. But we cannot go to them *in the hope of finding solutions.*

There may have been "modern liberals" in mid-17th century England, though Miss Coltman provides no example of any. The people she examines wished above all to be exempted from the problems involved in political choices and allegiances, but this is a far cry from John Stuart Mill. Even if there were, they could scarcely provide the kind of justification for "non-alignment" that Miss Coltman seeks. "A theme which appears in every civil war must have something about it of permanent validity," she writes. So we must conclude that, because in every revolution there will be a section for whom the price to be paid is too high, no revolution is ever justified.

Her books ends with the quietistic pessimism of Ascham and this, whatever comfort it may provide for those who need it, is unfortunate in a historical study. A whole generation of men in the forties and fifties of the 17th century grappled with the problems posed by the struggle for power. Hobbes, Harrington, Milton, Marvell, the Levellers, are all intimately involved in the debate on the nature of sovereignty and the grounds of obedience, political ideals and the need for political stability and social order, on tradition and innovation, on might and right. If Miss Coltman had resisted the temptation to read the 20th century into the 17th, she might have brought from the 17th century revolution some aids to enrich our understanding of the revolution of the 20th century. As it stands, it is poor history and, one must add, poorer consolation for liberals.

What is Jazz?

Laurie Green

SO the comrades responsible for *Music and Life* want somebody to take them aside and tell them what jazz is all about.* About time, too! Talking to present-day young people without being "with it" on the subject of jazz is like talking to Scotsmen and not knowing who Robert Burns was. So it's hard to define jazz? Try to define love, space, freedom—or even classical music.

A definition most jazz lovers I think would accept is, "The improvised music of the American Negro working class".

There is plenty of Marxist writing on jazz. Sidney Finkelstein's *Jazz—A People's Music* is very clear and highly thought of by non-Marxists in the jazz world. And the most perceptive and widely acclaimed book on jazz for many years is *The Jazz Scene* by Francis Newton (Eric Hobsbawm).

The columns of the better jazz magazines, *Jazz Monthly,* and *Jazz Journal,* are full of intelligent and sympathetic comment on the position of the American Negro. The premature death of such a great artist as the beloved Billie Holiday was felt as a cruel blow by hundreds of people.

Youngsters interested in jazz, and let us realise that this means hundreds of thousands, soon find that the great masters of the art are Negroes. I cannot see a racialist getting much support in a jazz club.

I think our Party has for far too long echoed uncritically some Soviet writers who equate jazz with all that is rotten and commercial in the U.S. entertainment industry, and speak as if music ended with Beethoven or perhaps Shostakovich. Comrades Bush, Corum and Russell are to be congratulated on their frankness and self-critical attitude—a vast improvement on the days when I heard a speaker say, "The Y.C.L. have asked me to open this discussion on jazz. I don't know anything about it and I don't like it."

There are many progressive musicians and writers—Bruce Turner, Humphrey Lyttelton, Owen Bryce, Iain Lang, Francis Newton, Johnny Dankworth, Ken Collyer—who would probably be glad to give their views on the connection between jazz and the fight for a better world.

In connection with jazz large numbers of young people come into contact with ideas of racial equality, learn of the vile effects of American capitalism and the way it degrades both music and people. With a deeper understanding of this stirring *contemporary* music we can get much closer to the generation which is going to abolish the bomb and build socialism.

* See *Marxism Today*: June 1962: p. 162.

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